The Missionary Church Association

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Historical Account of Its Origin and Development

By
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and
JARED F. GERIG

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Foreword

The Annual Conference of the Missionary Church Association in 1941 passed a resolution to the effect that a short historical account of the formation and development of the Missionary Church Association be prepared and published the following year. A committee was appointed to collect the data and to prepare the manuscript. At the following year's Conference the committee asked for an extension of time to continue this work. Now due to various causes the extension of time has reached almost ten years. The work was certainly not so colossal as to demand this much time, but various inescapable circumstances including the deaths of the last of the founders, Rev. J. E. Ramseyer and Rev. William Egle, greatly delayed the work. Rev. Henry Roth was appointed to take the place of William Egle, and he, the last surviving member of the founders, passed to his eternal reward on November 16, 1946. In the Conference of 1946, Rev. Walter H. Lugibihl was appointed to edit and write the account. In the Conference of 1949, Rev. Jared F. Gerig, Dean of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, was appointed to the Committee to give assistance in organizing the material and in revising it for publication. It should be added that a severe loss was sustained near the conclusion of this project when an original member of the committee, Rev. B. F. Leightner, secretary of the Missionary Church Association and greatly beloved instructor and registrar of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, was called to higher service on March 31, 1950. In all of these things we

are reminded that history is being made while history is being written. No historical record is up-to-date very long.

It is the sincere and prayerful hope of the Historical Committee that this record may serve the following purposes:

1. That an authentic account and accurate information regarding the history of the beginning and development of the Missionary Church Association shall be preserved and given to its members, their children and their children's children.

2. That by a clearer understanding of the historical events of the past including the motives for the founding of the church and the mission to which it was called, there may be promoted a new and increasing loyalty to the cause for which the church came into existence.

3. That all who read shall be inspired by the godly examples, the deep devotion, and the unmeasured sacrifices of the men and women who made history in the years that are past, and that there shall come because of this inspiration, a new surge of devotion and sacrifice.

4. That the Lord Jesus Christ may be greatly honored and glorified by this record of His work through a small part of His great and universal church.

THE HISTORICAL COMMITTEE
of the 1949 Conference,

W. H. LUGIBIHL, *Vice President of the M. C. A.*
JARED F. GERIG, *Dean, Fort Wayne Bible Institute*
C. H. MUSELMAN, *Publisher*

Introduction

In every movement there comes a time when those who had the vision for its beginning are gone and another generation comes to the fore that does not know of the convictions that led the founders forward, nor is ready to make the sacrifices that endeared the principles of the movement to its first generation supporters. As a result, it is an easy thing to minimize those convictions and to change the course and purpose of the movement. This was true in the days of the Judges of Israel. Of that time we read that "the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, . . . And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim. And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, . . . and provoked the Lord to anger." To avoid this situation they were instructed to tell to their children from generation to generation what God had done and commanded.

The writers of this volume have sought to present the facts connected with the beginning and progress of that movement which is known as The Missionary Church Association in such a way that it may be a witness of God's working with and through His people

to the present and succeeding generations. In doing so it has been necessary to record some things that it would have been more desirable to omit, but that would have occasioned a biased picture. True history must record adverse as well as favorable facts. It is hoped that the reading of these accounts may clarify the vision of the present generation and spur us on to more faithful and sacrificial service for God. May we not let the message become vague and lifeless nor the power by which they labored be lost. On the other hand, let us guard against the pitfalls that were snares in the way of those who have gone before us lest we suffer needless trouble and harm. Our prayer is that the Lord may bless this messenger as it goes on its mission.

J. A. RINGENBERG, President

Missionary Church Association

Contents

Chapter		Page
	Foreword	5
	Introduction	7
I.	Historical Roots	11
II.	Background of Early Leaders and Labors	19
III.	The Birth of a New Movement	27
IV.	Bethany Home and Bible Institute	33
V.	The Founding of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute	40
VI.	The Growth and Progress of The Fort Wayne Bible Institute	56
VII.	The Development of the Home Base	75
VIII.	The Foreign Missions Policy and Program	89
IX.	The Departmental Work	105
X.	The Publishing Interests, Past, Present, and Future	115
XI.	Doctrinal Development and Difficulties	122
XII.	Denominational Relations and the Fraternal Committee	133
XIII.	A Memorial To Rev. J. E. Ramseyer	140
XIV.	A Summary of Works and Workers	147
XV.	Evaluating the Past and Facing the Future	159
XVI.	List of Illustrations	165

CHAPTER I

Historical Roots

The history of any movement cannot be written within the compass of the years having to do with its organized activities. Before the organized existence of any movement, there are roots which reach back into the historical sub-soil gathering forces and influences for years and centuries. These mighty forces ultimately concentrate and break forth into new movements and organized efforts. When such an effort has spent itself, it will continue to make history whether for good or bad in the influences which are projected from it and which continue to have their effects upon succeeding generations.

The nineteenth century provided a background of variegated stimuli for the rise of many new religious organizations, institutions and movements. The conditions which eventually issued in the Civil War in the middle of the century caused the division of several of the larger denominations into northern and southern sections. The rise of apostasy and the more aggressive impact of modernism was also being felt in many churches, and conflicts were rising within denominations over doctrinal questions and issues. The inroads of formalism and liturgical orders of worship to the loss of the free type of service in which the Holy Spirit led and ruled was a chief complaint of many. Religion of the heart, the freedom of the Spirit, the evangelistic emphasis and appeal, were all disappearing in certain quarters much to the distress of those who were spiritual. It has been said that

"prior to 1870, the chief emphasis of American churches was on the salvation of the individual. After 1870, a new social order developed. The churches began to pay attention, not merely to the individual, but to society as well. Must not the principles of Christianity apply to all institutions? Should not the churches make the social order Christian?"[1] From this trend in the change of emphasis has come the widespread social gospel which has swept men and movements into the camp of modernism. The shift from the salvation of the individual to the salvation of society became a divisive wedge and a bone of contention which led directly to the founding of new movements loyal to the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

While many were being swept to the "left" into formalism and modernism, that fact was without doubt stimulating aggressive progress and advancement in the opposite direction. Churches giving emphasis to the great fundamentals of Christian experience such as personal regeneration, followed by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, were breaking away from the larger denominations. The great truth of the premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ was being heralded far and wide with new passion and interest. Divine healing for the body through faith in the atoning work of Christ became new light to many. The Fourfold Gospel, Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King, became the battle-cry for militant advance on many fronts.

Forces were set in motion in the last quarter of the century which led to the rise of "Fundamentalism" soon after the turn of the century as a counter-move-

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[1]Qualben, Lars P., *A History of the Christian Church.* New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1942. p. 548.

ment to Modernism. The great essentials of the Christian faith, the virgin birth of Christ, the bodily resurrection, the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, the substitutionary atonement of Christ, and the sudden, imminent, and bodily return of Christ, were all vitally emphasized and preached as indispensable fundamentals for faith and practice in the true church. Out of the struggles of these years were also born various movements designed for the promotion of scriptural holiness and the deeper life. This doctrine and emphasis was gradually being lost and forsaken by the churches, so that many found it necessary to unite in its defense and propagation.

These same years were productive also of some of the most aggressive missionary movements of modern times. The China Inland Mission founded in 1865 by the incomparable J. Hudson Taylor leads the parade of such foreign missionary endeavor. The Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1888, and the Sudan Interior Mission in 1893, are but examples of the score or more which were formed in these years of awakening and revival among true believers.

In the same period the Bible Institute was coming into being as a potent force in the field of religious education. By 1900, seven of these schools were in existence or in the process of beginning. The most noted of these with the dates of their founding were: Missionary Training Institute, 1882; Moody Bible Institute, 1886; Cleveland Bible College, 1892; Toronto Bible College, 1894; Providence Bible Institute, 1900; and God's Bible School, 1900. From 1900 to 1905, the following Institutes came into existence: Practical Bible Training School, 1901; Northwestern Schools, 1902; and the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, 1904. Since these early years some 140 additional Bible Institutes

and Bible Colleges have been established in the United States alone. The original purpose of such schools has been well stated by Dr. Charles Seidenspinner, President of the Southeastern Bible School of Birmingham, Alabama:

> "Institutions conceived in the spirit of a great religious impulse and born of a particular movement are formed with a definite purpose and characterized by a definite emphasis. Thus many of our large schools of higher learning, which today are without any theology, were once founded with a definite basis of evangelical doctrine and were true to the Lord. With these reaching a state of lukewarmness toward the Gospel message and to God's word, and in many instances a state of apostasy itself, God was pleased to bring the Bible institutes into being in order that a stream of young life might be released into Christendom with a firm faith grounded in the Word of God and with a zeal for the spreading of its message."[1]

An additional statement having to do with the original aims and objectives should not be overlooked here:

> "With the revivals during the latter part of the previous century and those of the earlier part of the century, both here and abroad, there came also a renewal of Bible reading and the need of a more systematic Bible study.
>
> "There seem to have been two leading factors that contributed largely to the establishment of the Bible institute idea: the need for sound, Bible-trained evangelists, preachers, and missionaries, and consequently and secondly, the need for institutions that could give systematic and well-rounded Bible studies and subjects closely related

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[1]Charles Seidenspinner, "Why a Bible School?" Pamphlet published by the Southeastern Bible School, Birmingham, Ala. 1946.

to the Bible, to evangelism, and to missionary work."[3]

In any examination of the spiritual and revivalistic impulses of the last half of the nineteenth century and the first years of the present century, one cannot overlook the outstanding men of God who spear-headed movements and gave leadership to the establishment of organizations and institutions which have been used mightily of God in the last half century. Such names as Charles Finney, A. J. Gordon, A. T. Pierson, D. L. Moody, A. B. Simpson, R. A. Torrey, J. Wilbur Chapman, and many others have become household words in evangelical circles. Such men were trail-blazers in evangelism and missionary endeavor in America.

In the great crisis in the closing years of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth, some twenty or more religious bodies came into existence, all of them orthodox and scriptural in doctrinal essentials, revivalistic and evangelistic in emphasis and practice, and worldwide in missionary vision and service. Some of the better known of these which gave emphasis especially to the deeper work of the Holy Spirit in the believer, were the Free Methodist Church, the Pilgrim Holiness Church, the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Church of the Nazarene, the General Council of the Assemblies of God, the Church of God, and others. The Wesleyan Methodist Church came into existence in 1843 over the much earlier issue of slavery. Among the different denominational bodies having their origin in this period was the Missionary Church Association founded in 1898.

No adequate historical picture can be viewed with-

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[3]Madsen, T. B., "The Origin of the Bible Institute," *The Evangelical Beacon*, Nov. 18, 1948, pp. 6, 7.

out giving some brief consideration to the coming of the Mennonites to America. The Missionary Church Association stems from a Mennonite source and without doubt has been influenced by Mennonite character and tradition.

Although it is not necessary in this study to review Mennonite origin and history in Europe, however some steps should be noted which are of related importance. Dr. John Wenger[4] cites the first step having a direct bearing upon the ultimate founding of the Missionary Church. He writes, "The Swiss Mennonites had only one major schism, that of the Amish, which occurred 1693-97. The leaders of the two sides were Hans Reist (Mennonite) and Jacob Ammann (Amish)." To get the earliest historical beginnings, one must keep his eyes upon the Amish Mennonites who had their origin in the schism of 1693-97. The earliest significant settlement of Mennonites in America dates back to 1683 when thirty-five men, women, and children settled in Germantown, Pennsylvania. "It has been estimated that from three to five thousand Mennonite souls reached America by the time of the Revolutionary War (1775). Included in this first wave of immigration were several hundred Amish who settled chiefly in Berks County, Pennsylvania. Both the Mennonites and the Amish came to America to realize religious freedom and to improve their economic opportunities."[5]

Dr. John C. Wenger also outlines four great waves of Mennonite immigration all taking place at different periods in the latter part of the eighteenth and during the nineteenth centuries. "The second great wave of

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[4]Wenger, John C., *Glimpses of Mennonite History*. Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Mennonite Publishing House, 1940. p. 36.

[5]ibid, pp. 39, 40.

immigration, 1815-61, began after the time of Napoleon and continued until the outbreak of the Civil War. In these years about three thousand souls, chiefly Alsatian Amish, but including some Swiss and South-German Mennonites, came to America. These immigrants settled in western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa. They made the voyage to America to escape both the militarism of Europe and the difficult economic situation which followed the Napoleonic Wars."[6] The third and fourth waves of Mennonite immigrants had to do largely with Russian Mennonites who settled in the mid-western states and Canada, and later in Brazil and Paraguay in South America.

The various settlements of Mennonites and Amish were organized into regional conferences according to states or combinations of states beginning approximately in 1750. The organization of conferences continued across the nineteenth century both in the Mennonite constituency and in that of the Amish Mennonites. Shortly after the Civil War, several divisions took place within the original church of the Amish Mennonites. The first preceded the War and resulted in the more progressive of the Amish Mennonites separating from the so-called Old Order Amish in about 1850. These later joined with the Mennonites. In 1864, Bishop Henry Egly, of Adams County, Indiana, led a movement based upon the necessity of personal regeneration and the re-baptism of those who had not had this experience before joining the church. By 1866, Bishop Egly had withdrawn from the church of the Old Order Amish Mennonites and had given leadership to the formation of a new church, The Defenseless Mennonite Church. This movement spread to

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[6]ibid, pp. 39, 40.

other places in Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois, and later congregations were established in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, and Michigan, and also in Zurich, Ontario. In 1890 and -91 a struggle developed within the Defenseless Mennonite Church over certain doctrinal issues and the mode of water baptism. This struggle issued in an exclusion from the church of certain leaders who under God's providence and guidance became the human instruments with others in the founding of the Missionary Church Association in August, 1898.

Dr. C. Henry Smith, in his book, "The Story of the Mennonites," lists sixty-one family names which were introduced into this country by the Amish immigrants of the nineteenth century. In this list are the following names of special interest to this history and commonly known within the constituency of the Missionary Church Association: *Gerber, Stuckey, Wagler, Augsburger, Rupp, Ramseyer, Auer* (now *Oyer), Egly, Klopfenstein, Neuhauser, Roth, Rediger, Burkey, Ringenberg, Zehr,* etc.

CHAPTER II

Background of Early Leaders and Labors

The last two decades of the nineteenth century were characterized by revivalism and spiritual awakening in many areas. Several men who became prominent leaders were used of God in those days in true apostolic fashion; and many of them wielded an influence which was felt strongly in the founding of the Missionary Church Association. Men whose lives God has touched and whose lives touch each other are sure to be productive of eternal achievement and lasting benefits.

Rev. A. E. Funk

Rev. A. E. Funk, a member of the Mennonite church in Pennsylvania and a minister of that church, was one of the leaders to be used of God in these earliest years. Mr. Funk was associated with Dr. A. B. Simpson, and through this contact and fellowship, his ministry was greatly enlarged and intensified. He traveled widely working mostly among German-speaking peoples to whom he preached a definite and positive message of salvation and sanctification. Mr. Funk and Dr. Simpson traveled as far west as Kansas and Nebraska ministering widely and successfully. These itineraries resulted in the formation of the "German Branch of the Christian Alliance" in 1888. Rev. A. E. Funk was elected President of this new organization, several vice presidents were elected, and Benjamin P. Lugibihl, of Bluffton, Ohio, was elected Secretary. In the previous year of 1887, Mr. Funk had been appoint-

ed General Secretary of the Christian and Missionary Alliance when it was first organized. Over a ten-year period, wide evangelistic labors among the German people led up to the inescapable need for an affiliation of churches to expedite cooperation and concerted effort in the propagation of the Gospel both at home and in foreign lands. In August, 1898, announcements were sent out to ministers and lay members convening them at Berne, Indiana, the last three days of the month. It was during these days that the Missionary Church Association was formed, and Mr. Funk was elected the first president.

REV. J. A. SPRUNGER

It was in the early nineties that God laid His all-powerful hand upon a business man of Berne, Indiana. That man was J. A. Sprunger, a member of the General Conference Mennonites. He was led into a deep experience of God, and was given a special understanding of prophetic truths and Old Testament types. While on a trip to Switzerland, he was ordained to the ministry, and later ministered widely under the institutional name of "Light and Hope." He was the founder and supervisor of deaconess homes and hospitals in Chicago, Cleveland, and other cities, and of an orphanage at Berne, Indiana, which was later moved to Birmingham, Ohio. He also conducted a training school for deaconesses and Christian workers for a few years in Cleveland, Ohio. Twenty-three students were enrolled in the class of 1900, and many of them went forth into full-time Christian work either at home or abroad. Those associated at this time with "Light and Hope" who entered into Christian service were Miss Marian M. Gerber, Mrs. Katie Moser Robertson, Miss Carrie Peters, Miss Fecke, Ernest and Mary Biber, Miss

Mathilda Combs, Miss Fannie Geyser, Miss Dieterli, Mrs. Anna Von Gunten Chalmers, and Miss Anna Scheidegger. Seven of the young men under Mr. Sprunger's training became ministers in the Missionary Church Association. They were S. J. Grabill, H. H. Amstutz, Simon S. Gerig, A. E. Witmer, Frank Hausser, Sam Gerig, and Henry J. Klopfenstein. Rev. A. M. Clauser was an instructor in the Light and Hope School.

Mr. Sprunger felt that there should be a uniting of the German people who were catching the vision of world-wide missions, and who were preaching the deeper life and the second advent. He accordingly planned several conferences which were quite well attended by the leaders of various Mennonite groups, the German Baptists, the Evangelicals, the Christian and Missionary Alliance, and others. In December, 1896, such a representative conference was held in Berne, Indiana, with the following persons present: George Lambert, A. E. Funk, John Regier, Saebastian Leip, Joseph Egly, Abraham Schellenberg, William Egle, Charles F. Ave, P. A. Wiebe, Peter Hochstettler, and Christian Egly. William Egle and A. E. Funk were appointed as secretaries, but no united work resulted from this or other similar gatherings. Revival fires were kindled and missionary passion was quickened, however, and the inspiration of these meetings was projected far into the future.

REV. AND MRS. B. P. LUGIBIHL

It was in answer to prayer in 1888, that Mrs. Katherine Lugibihl, wife of Benjamin P. Lugibihl, of Bluffton, Ohio, was supernaturally healed of a complication of diseases. Immediately there came into the hearts of Mr. and Mrs. Lugibihl a heavenly determination to know

Christ in His fulness, and then to make Him known. They attended the convention of the Christian Alliance at Linwood Park, near Vermillion, Ohio, where the deeper truths of the Gospel were preached by A. B. Simpson, Stephen Merrit, John Salmon, A. E. Funk, and others. The Lugibihls were led out of a formal church membership into aggressive Christian service. They left their farm, purchased a residence in Bluffton, Ohio, and opened it as a center of religious activity. It was called "Bethany Home" and became a retreat for the spiritually hungry as well as the physically sick. Here both men and women might come to wait upon God, be instructed more fully, and be prayed for that they might be healed. In 1891, the Lugibihls turned their work and home over to Mr. and Mrs. Adam Neiswander and moved to New York City for further preparation for what appeared to be foreign service. It was while there that they were advised because of their age to remain at home and to assist rather in the preparation and sending forth of younger people. After spending two additional years in Bible study and city mission work in Cleveland, Ohio, they returned to Bluffton, Ohio. Here they enlarged their residence to eighteen rooms, erected a windmill to provide the necessary water supply, and began the first term of the Bethany Home Bible Institute on November 1, 1895. This Institute became the antecedent of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute.

REV. J. E. RAMSEYER

During these years, God was calling and preparing another young man for leadership in His work. That young man was Joseph Eicher Ramseyer of Zurich, Ontario, Canada. On his grandfather's farm near Zurich, he gave his heart to God and found peace of soul in 1885 while following the plow. He and rela-

tives moved from Canada and settled near Elkton, Michigan, on a forty-acre farm. Here on the Michigan farm in July, 1891, he had what has since been called the famous willow bush experience.[1] His experience can best be given in his own words,

> "For three days I had given myself to prayer, and while kneeling in the willow bush, the Holy Spirit came in to abide. After singing a song, the words and music of which I had never before nor since heard, while standing in a heavenly atmosphere, I said, 'What is this that has come to me?' Immediately He said within, 'This is the gift of the Holy Spirit.' From that moment on, I began to realize the blessing of the promise of John 16:13-15. All glory to His ever blessed name!"

It was following this great Pentecostal experience that a strong conviction seized him that he should preach the Gospel to his neighbors and friends in the English language and thereby reach the whole community. In newly-begun Sunday services, in mid-week prayer meetings, and in cottage prayer meetings, God poured out His blessing through the consecrated ministries of His young servant. Revival broke out in the Huron Peninsula and nearly every home in that section of the country was touched and helped by the scope of its influence.

A church building[2] was erected in 1894 on a corner of the home farm of the Ramseyers, and J. E. Ramseyer served as its pastor until evangelistic labors demanded his full time. He was ordained to the Gospel ministry at Elkton, Michigan, in March, 1892, by Bishop Joseph Rediger of Flanagan, Illinois, and Rev. Joseph Egly of

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[1]The clump of willows stood about seventy-five rods east of where the Elkton, Michigan, Missionary Church now stands.

[2]Now the Elkton, Michigan, Missionary Church.

Berne, Indiana, both leading ministers of the Defenseless Mennonite Church. This ordination service was held in the humble farm house on the little homestead where God had so powerfully met him in the willow bushes.

In January, 1893, Mr. Ramseyer began his evangelistic work. Gracious revivals broke out wherever he ministered, beginning in Archbold, Ohio, where there was a deep moving of the Holy Spirit. He conducted revival services later at Grabill, Indiana, and in various other churches. The call of the work soon took him farther afield and he traveled to Illinois and Kansas where God used him and his assistants in successful campaigns. It was in Kansas that he met William Egle of Nebraska. A friendship and fellowship was begun which was to continue between these two servants of Christ for many years. Men of like precious faith are drawn together, and it was at about this same time that Mr. Ramseyer became acquainted with J. A. Sprunger, D. W. Kerr, of the Evangelical Association, A. E. Funk, Mr. and Mrs. B. P. Lugibihl, and others of equal spiritual fervor.

The revivals of this period are worthy of being described for the sake of many in the present generation who have never witnessed a genuine outpouring of the Spirit of God. There was always the preaching of the sterner truths of the Gospel including sin, judgment, and hell. These messages were accompanied by an additional emphasis upon the much newer truths of the "deeper life" or sanctification, divine healing, and the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The preaching of the Word under the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit brought deep and pungent conviction upon men. The power of God settled down upon audiences making men miserable and full of fear. Those

Tent Meeting Scene at Fort Wayne, Indiana, July, 1898.

Standing left to right: Henry Zehr, J. E. Ramseyer, Mrs. Katherine Zeller Ramseyer, Miss Emma Rediger. Seated: Ernest Biber, Adam Witmer.

REV. A. E. FUNK

Part of the Convention-Conference Group at the Missionary Church near Nickerson, Kansas. August, 1901. (Picture furnished by William H. Herr, of Denair, California)

Left to right, front row:

Katie Zehr-Augsburger, Miss Naffziger, Lillie Fliginger Eisele. Miss Naffziger, Miss Naffziger, Mrs. C. W. Oyer (nee Elizabeth Sutter).

Second row:

William Egle, A. E. Funk, Joseph Egle, J. E. Ramseyer, D. Y. Schultz, David Schindler.

Standing, left to right as faces come:

Miss Mary Oyer, Miss Lena Oyer, Mrs. William Egle (nee Judith Schindler), Rose Hirschy, Mrs. Adam Witmer, Miss Mary Miller, Rhoda Lugibihl-Hinkey, A. M. Clauser, B. P. Lugibihl, Lydia Oyer, Mrs. J. J. Fliginger, C. W. Oyer, J. J. Fliginger, Sol Miller (in front), Jacob Witmer, Henry Zehr, Henry Roth. Isaac Lantz, Adam E. Witmer, Henry Klopfenstein, Mrs. Noah Witmer, Noah Witmer, with Irene in arms. now Mrs. D. F. Siemens, in doorway Mr. and Mrs. Val Birkey.

Group of Ministers. Missionaries, Workers at Conference in August 1904, at Swanton, Ohio.

Front row, B. P. Lugibihl, Mrs. Lugibihl, Phoebe Brenneman-Snyder, Rhoda Lugibihl-Hinkey, Isaac Hess, Mary A. Funk, Mary B. Mullen, Alice S. Yoder, J. H. Stumpf.

Second row, Sol. Klopfenstein, J. A. Sprunger, William Egle, J. E. Ramseyer, Mrs. Ramseyer, Mrs. P. L. Eicher, Mrs. D. Y. Schultz, Mr. Schultz, A. E. Funk, two Light and Hope Deaconesses.

Third row, Noah Grabill, Henry Roth, John Imbach, D. C. Stucky, S. J. Grabill, Mr. Williams, Mose Hondrich, P. L. Eicher, C. W. Oyer, David Roth, S. D. Burkey, Alfred Gautschy.

Standing, Henry Goldschmidt, S. S. Gerig, M. S. Schrock, M. E. Ramseyer, David Scrindler, William Groenert, Edward Leightner, J. J. Christner, Mrs. A. M. Neiswander, Sam Gerig, A. D. Welty, Mr. Lang, H. H. Amstutz Adam E. Witmer, John J. Yaggy.

who left these services left in awesome silence oftentimes calling for spiritual help in the middle of the night. The revival was its own best advertising, and it would spread in its effects like a contagious disease. The power of the Spirit would reach men and women who never attended the services and they would find Christ in the privacy of their own homes. The message to backsliders, cold professors, and Christians alike brought restoration, revival, confession of secret sin, and much restitution. As Christians righted their lives and made restitution for their wrongs, others were convicted and converted through their influence. All such revivals were begun in and supported by earnest and importunate prayer. When the revival broke upon a community, its enthusiasm was released through radiant testimony and joyous singing. Miracles of healing and remarkable answers to prayer were common experiences, and many times the life of an entire community would be transformed by the power of God. It is worthy of note that a real revival always took precedence over all manner of secular work. The following is quoted directly from Mr. Ramseyer's own writings, "I should mention that this revival took place in March just at the time everyone was sowing oats. But oats or no oats, the crowds would fill the church long before dark." Again from Mr. Ramseyer, we learn something of the outstanding results in terms of Christian workers, "I doubt if there ever was a revival in modern times that produced so many ministers and missionaries." Men were not only saved and sanctified, but also called out into full-time Christian service. Many of the preachers and missionaries of later years were saved, filled with the Spirit, and called in these early revivals in many places.

Rev. J. E. Ramseyer was invited by the Lugibihls to assist in the work of the Bible School at Bluffton, Ohio, when it was opened in November, 1895. He spoke at the convention held in connection with the inauguration of the school and also accepted the call to become the Superintendent. Engaged with the Lugibihls in this venture in the training of workers were Mr. Ramseyer, J. A. Sprunger, D. W. Kerr, and others. Men of kindred faith and mind were uniting their efforts and concentrating their ministries to the glory of God and to the extension of His work.

CHAPTER III

The Birth of a New Movement

The years from 1891 to 1896 were eventful years with many lines of converging effort. Men of common interests, beliefs, hopes and vision were being drawn together into a binding fellowship and faith. The Lord was preparing the way and laying the foundation for the greater things to come.

These years were years of struggle within the older fellowship of the Defenseless Mennonite Church. "The baptism with the Holy Spirit subsequent to the new birth, the second coming of our blessed Lord for His waiting saints, and the resurrection of the just before the great tribulation, which precedes the thousand years of peace on earth, and water baptism by immersion"[1] were the issues over which the battle waged within the church. The great revivals of these years centered around the preaching of these great truths, and many were being led into the deeper experiences of grace. This conflict came to a decisive stage when J. E. Ramseyer followed the Lord in baptism by immersion in Lake Erie at Cleveland, Ohio, in August, 1896, and many others were being led of the Lord to follow his example. A special conference of the church was called for December 7, at Berne, Indiana, and on the following day, December 8, Mr. Ramseyer was dismissed from the church as a worker and member.

Yearly conventions and special conferences had been the means of uniting and bringing together men

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[1] *The Missionary Worker*, August 1, 1889.

and women of kindred spirits and hearts. A program of "The Yearly Convention of the Christian Alliance" printed in German by the Berne Witness Company, Berne, Indiana, and dated August 7-15, 1896, listed the following speakers:

Rev. A. E. Funk, President	New York
D. Y. Schultz	Bluffton, Ohio
J. E. Ramseyer	Bluffton, Ohio
A. C. Gaebelein, Jewish Mission	New York
J. A. Sprunger	Chicago, Illinois
Solomon Eby	Dundee, Ontario, Canada
Joseph Egly	Linn Grove, Indiana
C. W. Oyer	Bluffton, Ohio
H. E. Ramseyer	Cleveland, Ohio
Julius Tropf	Cleveland, Ohio
B. P. and K. Lugibihl	Bluffton, Ohio

This convention was held at Beulah Park, Cleveland, Ohio. Rev. D. W. Myland of Cleveland, Ohio, was to be consulted concerning the reservation of rooms or the pitching of tents. The program further announced that the "Evangeliums-Liederbuch" (German Gospel Hymns) would be used in the convention. The German services were conducted in a tent simultaneously with the tabernacle services which were in English. Many who later became active leaders and members in the constituency of the Missionary Church were led into the deeper life in these conventions. Many also followed the Lord in baptism by immersion. It was in this convention of August 7-15, 1896, that J. E. Ramseyer was immersed by Rev. D. W. Kerr in the waters of Lake Erie. Some of these who followed the Lord paid a price for their loyalty to truth and conviction. Mr. Ramseyer later wrote, "I had had the light for five years before I took the step myself. A goodly number of us had received the same light."

A connecting link of the history is written by Mr. Ramseyer, "During the summer of 1897 we had tent meetings in several states. This was the summer that many from the church, who believed in immersion as the way our Saviour was baptized, took the step and were baptized. This of course barred them from church membership and the question of a new church home began to be agitated. In the spring of 1898, I went South to find open doors for the full Gospel and spent several months in tent meetings. In August of 1898, I was called from Tennessee to meet with some of the brethren who wanted to take steps toward organizing a church."[2]

The same call which went to Mr. Ramseyer in Tennessee went to other ministers and laymen. It was a call to convene at Berne, Indiana, for the last three days of August, 1898. The purpose for which the meeting was called was to consider the organization of a new church. More concerted action and organized effort among the German people in the presentation and propagation of the truths they had received and followed was felt to be an inescapable necessity. The suggestion was made that they unite with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, but Rev. A. E. Funk explained the nature of that movement as being undenominational and without intentions for organizing local churches. After much prayer, consultation, and discussion, it was decided by the group under God's leadership and guidance to effect a new church organization. In simple terse language the minutes of that meeting state that "The Missionary Church Association was founded on August 29, 1898, at Berne, Indiana." The men who had a vital part in the formation of the Missionary Church

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[2]*The Missionary Worker*, August 1, 1939.

Association were: David Schindler, Jacob Witmer, David Roth, Henry Roth, William Egle, B. P. Lugibihl, J. E. Ramseyer, A. E. Funk, D. W. Kerr, D. Y. Schultz, J. A. Sprunger, Joseph Egly, Samuel D. Burkey, M. E. Ramseyer, and others.

The organization effected at this first conference was a simple one consisting of the officers and one committee. Rev. A. E. Funk was elected the first president, J. E. Ramseyer, vice-president, William Egle, secretary, D. Y. Schultz, assistant secretary, and David Schindler, treasurer. A constitution of approximately three hundred words, unique for its simplicity and brevity, was adopted. Article VI of this constitution made provision for a Mission Board consisting of five members under whose supervision all missionary work was to be carried on. The first Missionary Committee consisted of Joseph Egly, B. P. Lugibihl, Samuel D. Burkey, David Roth, and David Schindler. Minutes of this first conference as well as other official meetings until the early part of 1907 were written in German.

The choosing of a name for a new church organization was a consideration of no little importance. Some of the brethren under the leadership of J. A. Sprunger advocated the inclusion of the word *Mennonite* in the name. After much prayer and discussion on the problem of name, it was decided to call the new movement, *The Missionary Church Association* (Missions Gemeinde Verein). Rev. D. Y. Schultz, the first editor of *The Missionary Worker,* gives expression in an editorial[3] to the reasons which probably motivated the founding fathers in their choice of a name: "Let us be true to it, and may God help us not to belie our name by our nature. It is not well to think of self or to invite the spir-

[3]*The Missionary Worker,* October 1, 1904, Vol. I, No. 3.

it of self-consciousness, yet it is in order that brief attention is called to the great meaning conveyed by the expression, 'The Missionary Church Association.' Look at the word 'Association.' How it speaks of a coming together, a standing together, a working together, of oneness and fellowship, of everyone being a part of the whole and taking part in service as well as blessing. Then the word 'Church' which, translated from the Greek, means called out ones. Are we really out of Egypt and out of the wilderness and in Canaan, out of the world and in the heavenlies, out of self and in Christ? Have we distinctly heard the call? Have we a definite calling to live for, and do we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling? And the word 'Missionary,' what a volume it speaks—called out and associated to be missionaries, wherever our lot in life has stationed us. It is so easy to lose the spirit of witnessing, the spirit of going and telling. It is easy to sit down and do nothing. Let not 'first love' wane in its fervor." It is worthy of note that in keeping with this exposition of the name, the first conference which resulted in the organization of the Missionary Church Association, made provision for doing little else but missionary work. That seemed to be the great passion and burden for which they wanted organized existence.

For the firm establishment of the work of the Missionary Church in its earliest years, much credit is due to the able leadership of A. E. Funk. He "was a man of few words but of excellent judgment" and his wise counsel was sought and followed in later years after he had relinquished his official position and duties. He was a kindly man with a great heart and with a breadth of sympathy which enabled him to understand others. He served as president of the Missionary Church Association for two years and two months, and then de-

clined the office because of official responsibilities in his relation to the Christian and Missionary Alliance. He however served in the capacity of vice-president of the Missionary Church Association for fifteen years. In the conference of November 4-11, 1900, J. E. Ramseyer was elected president to succeed A. E. Funk. Mr. Ramseyer held this office and gave wise and spiritual leadership to the church until his death on January 25, 1944. The Missionary Church Association and the Fort Wayne Bible Institute stand as living monuments to the vision and faith of a man who for forty-four consecutive years was its spiritual father and executive leader.

Following the organization of the church in August, 1898, Missionary Churches quickly came into existence in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Kansas. The first Missionary Church to be built, was the Linn Grove Missionary Church,[4] located three miles west of Berne, Indiana. It was organized on August 29, 1898, simultaneously with the founding of the Missionary Church Association. The church building was erected the following year and dedicated on September 10, 1899 by J. E. Ramseyer and D. W. Kerr, of Findlay, Ohio. Rev. Joseph Egly was the first pastor of the church, David Schindler, the deacon, and Chris Hirschy, Jacob Schindler, and John Moser, the trustees. Only four other churches came over from the Defenseless Group.

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[4]Now called the West Berne Missionary Church.

CHAPTER IV

Bethany Home and Bible Institute

In the spring of 1888, Mr. and Mrs. B. P. Lugibihl opened Bethany Home near Bluffton, Ohio. For one year the home was located in the country where those who needed spiritual help or physical healing might come to wait upon the Lord. At the end of the first year, after much prayer, the Lord made it clear to the Lugibihls that a more suitable location was needed to carry on the work already begun and so signally blessed of God. With clear guidance from the Lord, they bought a property on upper Main Street in Bluffton, Ohio, and the new home was opened to the sick and oppressed in 1889.

While the house on upper Main St. was changed, it was the desire and determination of those in charge that it continue to be a "home" with characteristic home atmosphere and friendliness. It was aptly said by the Superintendent of the home that "if the home is the mightiest force in human society and in the formation of character, the idea that underlies it should be utilized in the Christian church. Too much has the church taken on the atmosphere of the school, and too little that of the home. Indeed God seems never to have intended His church to lose this feature of the home spirit and the home circle. The first picture of the Apostolic Christianity is a great household of faith and love. 'The church in the house' was the usual description of the early congregation. Bethany Home, then, is an humble attempt to consecrate the tender and holy intimacies and associations of Christian fellowship."

Bethany Home was opened to three classes of people: first, those of God's children who desired to wait upon Him for a deeper experience of His grace and to learn more fully the secret of His abiding presence. Many came and found Christ as their Sanctifier, and discovered that it was not a blessing they wanted but the Blesser Himself, not an experience, but Jesus. It was emphasized and underscored that this was and ever shall be the chief object of Bethany Home: "To get those who come . . . right with God and to lead them into a true, spiritual, holy and victorious life in Christ." This great spiritual purpose of the home was expressed in the words of the Founder: "Often have we entreated our guests on their first arrival to banish all thoughts of healing, and whether they live or die, fix all their attention on becoming wholly the Lord's, and then it would not be hard to claim the healing too."

The second class were those needing instruction for healing and who desired to trust the Lord for their bodies. It was not the purpose of those in charge to unduly magnify the importance of physical healing, but "to maintain in this day of unbelief, a living monument . . . that God is real and almighty and Jesus, the same, yesterday, today and forever . . ." The third group included those needing a place of temporary rest and seeking escape from the ordinary pressure of life. It was faced even in that earlier day that "life to most persons is a routine of care and labor and a rush of business and occupation, so that the spirit becomes stunted and withered, and even the Christian worker may be so absorbed and interested in his work, that there is lack of communion, and quiet waiting on God for His voice in the soul and his work becomes almost more to him than Jesus, and it is an unspeakable bless-

ing to come apart and rest awhile in undisturbed communion with God and His people."

This spiritual retreat "out of the smoky cities into the balmy fresh air of the country" became a mecca of unusual blessing to many across several years. While the Lugibihls were in New York and Cleveland from 1891 to 1895, the work of Bethany Home was carried on by others with unabated fervor and faithfulness even though with a more limited program. It was advertised that meetings were held every Tuesday at 8:00 P.M. in English, and every Saturday at the same hour in the German language. There were Bible talks daily on the fullness of life in Christ Jesus for body, soul, and spirit. Morning prayers were conducted daily at 7:30 A.M. and every Sunday a consecration service at 2:30 P.M. In the latter service time was always given to prayer, testimony, and the anointing of the sick. The seriousness of purpose and the determination to be about the Master's business was well expressed in a desire to have it understood "that this Home is not designed as a permanent home for dependent persons, chronic invalids and incurables that will not take the Lord as their Healer. We believe it is the will of God to see them go their way rejoicing. Nor is this in any sense a cheap boarding-house for persons in search of such a place."

In 1895, the Lugibihls returned from two years of Bible training and city mission work in Cleveland, Ohio. They had been impressed with the possibilities of a "short scriptural and spiritual course of training" which would equip the noble young men and women of our land for a useful life of service for Christ. Realizing the great need of such qualified workers for the whitened harvest field of the world, and being aware that the time was short and speedily passing, and that

the King's business requireth haste, they were moved to bring the matter to the Lord and to seek divine guidance. After patiently waiting upon the Lord, they were definitely led to open the Bethany Bible Institute in November, 1895, in connection with Bethany Home. The house on upper Main Street was enlarged to eighteen rooms, and equipped with a chapel and all of the latest improvements of that day. The first term of the Institute closed on April 2, 1896, with the exercises being held in the Town Hall in Bluffton, Ohio.

Rev. J. E. Ramseyer accepted a call to become the first principal of the Bible Institute while B. P. Lugibihl continued as superintendent of Bethany Home. Rev. J. A. Sprunger and Rev. D. W. Kerr were also engaged as Bible teachers and they were assisted in this field by Mrs. B. P. Lugibihl. The Bible was said to be "the only textbook." Others on the teaching staff included Mr. Charles O. Davis, elocutionist; Miss Katherine Zeller, grammar; Professor W. D. Moon, penmanship; and Mr. U. S. Amstutz, music. Classes were scheduled in the "common branches" each day except Saturday from 10:00 to 11:45 A.M., Bible Studies in German from 2:00 to 2:45 P.M., and Bible Studies in English from 2:45 to 5:00 P.M. Vocal music was taught every Friday at 7:00 P.M. The Missionary Band, the forerunner of the present Student's Mission Band, met every other Friday at 4:00 P.M. There was no charge for tuition, and the cost of room and board was $3.00 per week. The first announcements of the Institute were printed in German, and the school was advertised as undenominational and non-sectarian.

The first student body consisted of twenty-five students, ten "ladies" and fifteen "gentlemen," and they are listed as follows: Ann Nyffenegger, Lizzie Kestenholtz, Barbara E. Ramseyer, Rhoda Lugibihl, Minnie

Neiswander, Bessie Moser, Susie Hochstettler, Lizzie Herford, Teena Lugibihl, Anna Moser, Henry Zehr, Henry Klopfenstein, George Buchanan, Joseph Rediger, Nicholas Niggeler, Noah Witmer, Chris Oyer, Chris Fliginger, Sol Miller, Henry Miller, Moses Honderich, Jacob Matzinger, Thomas Kincaid, Daniel Frantz, and U. S. Steiner.

The student body in the second year remained at twenty-five, but with some change in the personnel. While some did not return, the following new students came to enroll: Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Ramseyer, Carrie Roth, Naomi Schrock, Linda Neiswander, Sarah Lugibihl, Cassie Schindler, C. W. Oyer, C. W. Linker, L. D. Carroll, Calvin Berthoud, Joseph Eschleman, Christian Neiswander, Christian Eicher, Henry Schindler, and Adam Witmer.

Joseph E. Ramseyer was principal for two years, and due to the increasing demands of his evangelistic travels, he was relieved of the responsibilities of administration in the Institute. He was followed in the office of principal by Rev. D. Y. Schultz who had come to Bluffton to teach in the previous year from College Point, New York. Others associated with Mr. Schultz in the teaching ministry were J. E. Ramseyer, D. W. Kerr, Mrs. B. P. Lugibihl, Mrs. J. E Ramseyer, Mrs. D. Y. Schultz, and B. P. Lugibihl, the superintendent of Bethany Home.

Mr. Schultz gave spiritual and scholarly leadership to the school for three years from 1897 to 1900, and then moved to Sheridan, Pennsylvania, where he became affiliated with another school. Rev. E. F. Hutchinson followed him as principal in 1900. The instructors in Bible in addition to Mr. Hutchinson were Arthur Nash, better known as "Golden Rule" Nash,

and J. E. Ramseyer, who gave part time due to his many evangelistic labors. Mrs. Arthur Nash was listed as teacher of the English language.

For six years the Bethany Bible Institute conducted its program of educating young people for the service of Jesus Christ. Its leadership was always strong, spiritual, and faithful to the Word of God. Many of its students became successful and well-known servants in all parts of God's great harvest field. The Institute did not reopen after the close of the term in April, 1901, caused largely by the death of Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer on July 1, 1899, and of Mrs. B. P. Lugibihl in April, 1900. The loss of these two gifted women who had filled such important places in the ministry of both the Home and the Institute was a severe blow and keenly felt.

In the immediate years following the close of the Bethany Bible Institute, there was constant inquiry regarding the reopening of the school. Persistent demand brought it to the attention of the Fifth Annual Conference of the Missionary Church Association being held at Groveland, Illinois, from September 12 to 20, 1903. The Conference resolved "that the reopening of the Bible School be left to the discretion of Brethren J. E. Ramseyer, D. Y. Schultz, and B. P. Lugibihl." A later statement on the origin gives evidence that these brethren "after much prayerful consideration . . . were fully assured" that the Institute should be reopened. In keeping with this conviction and assurance, the first term of "The Bible School of the Missionary Church Association" was held at Bethany Home in Bluffton, Ohio from January 1 to April 1, 1904. The term opened with a convention from December 26 to January 1, 1904 which was held in Herr's Opera Hall. The workers who were expected to be present were Rev. Isaac Hess, from South China; Rev. H.

Campbell, Congo, Africa; Rev. W. F. Meminger, Chicago, Illinois; Rev. J. E. Ramseyer, Rev. D. Y. Schultz, Rev. D. W. Kerr, and Rev. C. W. Oyer of the Institute staff; and Rev. William Egle, Rev. David Roth, and "Sisters Brenneman and Snyder."

The object of the M.C.A. Bible Institute was expressed briefly as follows: "To extend an opportunity, not only to such that believe to have a call to the ministry, but also to others who desire to acquaint themselves more fully with the Word of God, to come and sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to such that have been taught by Him." The first officers of the Institute included J. E. Ramseyer, Superintendent; D. Y. Schultz, Assistant Superintendent; and B. P. Lugibihl, Business Manager. D. Y. Schultz, D. W. Kerr, J. A. Sprunger, and A. W. Roffe were the instructors in Biblical exposition; C. W. Oyer in Tropical Studies; J. E. Ramseyer in Christian Doctrine; Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer in Music; and Miss Fanny Foster in Grammar.

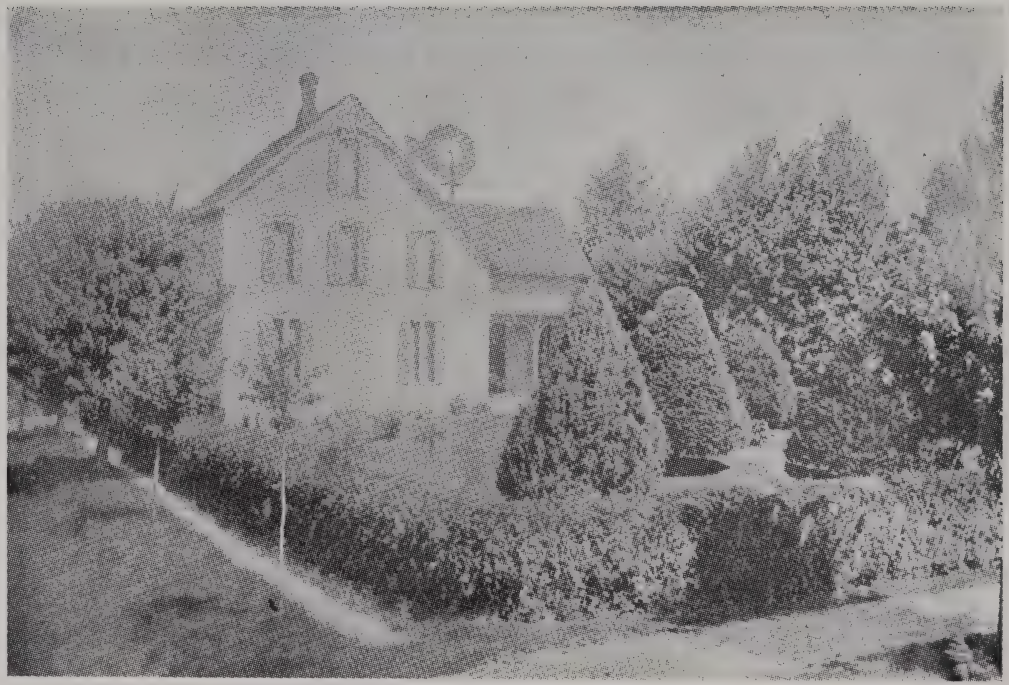
Thirty-six students enrolled for the first term of the reopened Bethany Bible Institute. They are listed as follows: Bertha Canfield, Barbara Diller, Christ Egle, Emma Egle, Barbara Eicher, Peter Eicher, Alfred Gautschy, Samuel Gerig, Lizzie Hilty, Katie Hochstettler, Bertha Hummard, Letitia Jackson, Christ Leichty, Edward Leightner, Angeline Lugibihl, Edward Lugibihl, Mrs. J. Matthes, Idella Miller, William S. Miller, Christ Moser, Noah F. Moser, Maggie Mollett, Christ Neiswander, Clara Nofzinger, Lydia Nofzinger, Lydia Oyer, Ezra Rupp, Mary Rupp, George Sharp, Joseph Switzer, Lavina Steiner, Frank Steiner, Clara Webber, Anna Webber, William Yauch, Edward Zimmerman.

CHAPTER V

The Founding of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute

After the reopening of Bethany Bible Institute under the auspices of the Missionary Church Association, it was very evident at the close of the first term on April 1, 1904, that larger quarters and a more suitable location would be necessary to carry on the training program envisioned by the founders. Assurance was given to the students as they left that spring that earnest effort would be made to secure larger and more adequate facilities as soon as possible.

Investigation began early in the summer of 1904. Rev. and Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer and Rev. D. Y. Schultz, upon returning from a convention tour into Kansas and Nebraska, stopped over in Kansas City and Peoria, Illinois, to determine the possibilities of locating the school in one of these cities. Neither city seemed to be the Lord's place, and receiving no encouragement, they traveled further eastward to Fort Wayne, Indiana. Here they gathered in the home of Rev. William Egle to pray and consider the possibilities of locating in Fort Wayne. J. E. Ramseyer, D. Y. Schultz, and William Egle were joined by B. P. Lugibihl of Bluffton, Ohio, and the Roth brothers, David and Henry, of Grabill, Indiana, and as a committee of six who became the co-founders of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, they diligently sought for a suitable site. Several sites were considered and appraised and all of them were either not well suited for school purposes or they were too high in price. The old build-



BETHANY HOME, BLUFFTON, OHIO

CHURCH CONVENTION, ARCHBOLD O. AUG. 06.

1909

Officers and Workers at 13th Annual Convention at Pandora, Ohio, August 17, 1911.

Front row, left to right, Henry Klopfenstein. J. J. Christner, Henry Roth, S. D. Burkey, A. E. Funk, Henry E. Ramseyer, J. E. Ramseyer, C. W. Oyer, A. M. Clauser. J. D. Williams, D. C. Stucky, Julius Tropf, H. H. Amstutz and children.

Second row, standing. John Thiessen, Elton Roth, A. E. Witmer, ————————, Wilhelmena Boenke, Tena Goosen, Affie Smootz, Mrs. S. D. Burkey, Mrs. A. E. Funk, Mrs. H. E. Ramseyer, Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer, Mrs. C. W. Oyer, Mrs. Noah Schumacher, Mrs. C. L. Eicher, Mrs. J. D. Williams, two children, Mrs. H. H. Amstutz.

Third row, ————————, Ezra Rupp, C. A. Gerber, Calvin Steiner, Henry Meier, Lena Gerber, child ————————, ————————, ————————, D. C. Rupp, Noah Schumacher, C. L. Eicher, H. C. Thiessen, E. Kuhnle, D. B. Basinger, W. J. Amstutz, Sol. Miller, S. S. Gerig, Sol Klopfenstein, Noah Moser, S. J. Grabill.

ings of Taylor University were investigated and also the valuable tract upon which the Lutheran Hospital was built and now stands.

It is evident that some discouragement resulted from the seeming fruitless search, but the persistent real estate agent had one more site. The Roth brothers had returned to Grabill, and B. P. Lugibihl to Bluffton, Ohio, and it was left to the remaining three on the committee, accompanied by Mrs. Ramseyer, Mrs. Schultz, and Esther Schultz, to go to view the last plot of ground. They traveled across the city from the north to the south, not quite knowing whither they were going. A street-car ride of four miles brought them to Organ Avenue (now Kinsmoor Avenue), the end of the car line on South Wayne Ave. From the city line, they walked southward through tall grass and weeds for four blocks and were led into a beautiful grove of native timber, largely oak and hickory. The little group stood silent and apprehensive in this natural paradise, not quite sure of several things. How could they meet the price of this very desirable four and one-half acres? What would they do for utilities with the sewer, electric and gas lines, four blocks to the north? Fears were soon dispelled when it was learned that the price was the remarkably low figure of $1800.00. The fact that the entire plot was within the city limits made possible the eventual availability of all city utilities. While close to the city, the site was far from the industries and the railroads, away from the din and dirt of the city, and ideal for a Christian institution with high standards for study and training. The tract of land was bought on option on July 12, 1904, and the money was borrowed to pay for it. While those who pioneered the way at the time of purchase could not see into the future, it has become

increasingly evident that the Lord was leading. The country plot in 1904 has now become the center of the finest type of city residential district. Large palatial homes, a beautiful park, winding streets, and all that makes up the best in city environment surrounds the campus of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute.

It was certain that no time should be lost if any school work was to be done in the winter of 1904-05. The Conference of the Missionary Church Association convening at Swanton, Ohio, on August 25, 1904, passed a resolution that "the work of the Executive Committee with reference to the purchase of the land for the Bible Training School and the preparatory work of the entire committee shall be recognized and accepted." A further resolution was passed that "we as the Missionary Church Association, with faith in God, proceed with the building of the Bible School at Fort Wayne, and that Brethren J. E. Ramseyer, D. Y. Schultz, Chris Hirschy, David Roth, and William Egle serve as a building committee." At the convention held in conjunction with the Conference of that year, a beginning was made in the raising of funds for the new building. Mr. Chris Hirschy, the last member of the first building committee, died at the age of 102 on December 1, 1950 at Berne, Indiana.

On Monday, September 5, 1904, a simple groundbreaking service was held. Rev. Isaac Hess, missionary to China, removed the first shovel full of earth and offered a prayer of thanksgiving. In a most fitting manner a missionary was chosen to bless and hallow the ground, which was to become sacred to scores of others who in later years came to prepare for service in foreign lands. Plans for the new building were drawn by architect R. A. Bradley, who was closely assisted by D. Y. Schultz. Mr. H. A. Grotholtman, a

member of the Reformed Church, was engaged as the general contractor, and the contract was let for $28,000. The home of Rev. William Egle became the center of operations, with the Ramseyers and the Schultzes also living temporarily in the home. Mr. Ramseyer, Mr. Schultz, and Mr. Egle, shared the responsibility of close supervision over the work.

Building operations began with the excavation for the basement on September 16. The blessing of the Lord was upon the project from the beginning. Favorable fall weather made it possible to enclose the building before cold winter set in. When no other furnace was available in the city, one was purchased from the Redeemer Lutheran Church since they were not ready for its installation in their new building. It was installed and ready for use when the plastering began. The heavy firing of the furnace by Mr. Egle and Mr. Schultz, assisted by students, greatly hastened the drying of the plaster, and made possible the earlier occupancy of the building. It was a great boon to the faith of these early pioneers to see the work progress, the foundation go in, the walls go up, the roof go on, and the "family of faith" move in, without one hindering thing to hold up the work.

Announcements had been made and wide publicity given to the fact that the school would open on January 3, 1905. While the new building was not ready for occupancy at that time, the new term did open with classes being held in the City Rescue Mission, 118 Columbia Street. Rev. A. E. Witmer was superintendent of the City Mission, assisted by Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Quince. Bible classes were held in the morning, English and Music classes in the afternoon, and evangelistic services each night. The City Mission environment afforded constant opportunity to put theology and theory

to the test. The classroom often became a practical laboratory for Christian service when occasionally a drunk or two would visit a class to get out of the cold. The students who came for the first term were temporarily housed in private homes, some near the Mission and others closer to the new building on South Wayne Avenue and Rudisill Boulevard.

On January 25, 1905, Mr. and Mrs. Ramseyer, and Mr. and Mrs. Schultz, and their daughter Esther, moved into the new building, occupying the second floor rooms in the west wing. The student body moved into the building on February 7th. Mr. and Mrs. B. P. Lugibihl sold their home at Bluffton, Ohio and gave one-third of its price toward the indebtedness of the Bible School building. They then moved to Fort Wayne where Mr. Lugibihl became Business Manager and Mrs. Lugibihl took over the responsibilities of the kitchen.

The Dedication service was held on February 16, 1905 with Rev. A. E. Funk and Rev. Charles F. Ave as the special speakers. The Packard Piano Company, located at Fairfield and Organ Avenues, donated a piano for this occasion and the instrument was later purchased for the music department. With recognition of God's favoring providence, and with hearts too full to be adequately expressed, the new building was set apart as

"A MEMORIAL
of God's Grace
A WITNESS
of Answered Prayer
THE FRUIT
of Many Liberal Gifts and Loving Sacrifices
A HOME
for Young Men and Women

Site purchased July 12, 1904
Erection begun September 16, 1904
Occupied partly, January 25th, 1905
Occupied, wholly, February 7th, 1905."

The Fort Wayne Sentinel carried an article at this time, which describes how the work progressed so rapidly and so free of fanfare that the city was not aware of what was going on just inside its limits: "The Missionary Church Association has contracted to build a large school on South Wayne Avenue on a plot of ground recently purchased for that purpose. The project has been given no publicity, but the entire deal has been carried on quietly, and nothing was known of the nature of the plans until the officers of the Missionary Church Association announced their purpose. The first work was begun on the edifice the 16th of last September. It was complete and ready for occupancy in less than four months, and last Saturday the students and faculty moved into it. It is a handsome building and stands in a beautiful grove, an institution for the education of Missionary Workers."

The administrative officers and faculty of the Bible Training School in its opening year in Fort Wayne were: D. Y. Schultz, Superintendent; B. P. Lugibihl, Business Manager; J. E. Ramseyer and D. W. Kerr assisted Mr. Schultz in Bible teaching; Mrs. Ramseyer taught music and directed the General Chorus; and Mrs. P. L. Eicher taught English. In these earlier years, Mr. Ramseyer devoted much of his time to evangelistic work and was away from Fort Wayne many months at a time. The Executive Committee was composed of D. Y. Schultz, J. E. Ramseyer, B. P. Lugibihl, and William Egle. Mr. Egle, after moving nearer the school, also gave a series of Bible lectures in German.

The closing exercises were held on May 12, 1905,

and the following seventy-three students were enrolled for the first term in Fort Wayne: W. J. Amsutz, James Ayres, Fannie Baumgartner, Susie Bixel, Adam Bixler, S. D. Burkey, Mrs. S. D. Burkey, Bertha Canfield, J. J. Christner, Philip Diller, Lewis Diller, Barbara Eicher, P. L. Eicher, Christ Egle, Emma Egle, Christ Fliginger, Mrs. Christ Fliginger, Mary E. Goldsmith, Noah Grabill, Elizabeth Hilty, Mary Hilty, Matilda Hirschy, Etta Jackson, Letitia Jackson, Amelia Kliewer, Ida Klopfenstein, Rilla Klopfenstein, Solomon Klopfenstein, Isaiah C. Kohli, Amos Lehman, E. J. Leightner, Mrs. E. J. Leightner, Rose Leightner, C. A. Leichty, Walter H. Lugibihl, Mrs. J. T. Matthes, Carrie Meister, William S. Miller, Idella Miller, Lena Mollett, Noah F. Moser, Lydia Nofzinger, Carl Norquist, John Norquist, John Oyer, C. P. Regier, Irene Rice, Ezra Rupp, Libbie Rupp, Emil Schwab, Johanna Schwab, Agnes Sprunger, Alberta Sprunger, Franklin Sprunger, George Stauffer, Edwin Steiner, Estella Steiner, Frank Steiner, Lavina Steiner, Sarah Steiner, Simon Stuckey, Joseph Switzer, Lizzie Wagler, Jacob G. Wall, Anna Weber, C. C. Welty, J. J. Welty, Katie Wente, Clara Yaggy, Nelson Youse, William Youch, Ida Zeigler.

THE FOUNDERS

To the faith and vision of six men must be credited the founding of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute. They were J. E. Ramseyer, D. Y. Schultz, B. P. Lugibihl, Henry Roth, David Roth, and William Egle. They differed in educational attainments, personal temperaments, executive ability, and family background, but they all responded to a single vision and labored with a united passion. It has been said that the purchasing of the land and the erection of the Administration Building in 1904 was a far greater step of faith than the erection of the building in their honor in 1941 at a

cost of almost five times as much. They bore heavy burdens, gave themselves to the work sacrificially, and poured their lives into the struggling venture of faith. They were rewarded and the work prospered and grew and was blessed of God. Now the Fort Wayne Bible Institute stands as a monument to their God-given vision, undaunted faith, and courageous sacrifice. They are all now among the "cloud of witnesses" who have run the race and won. The following sketches are given in the order of their decease:

Benjamin P. Lugibihl

Benjamin P. Lugibihl was born on August 31, 1849, on the old homestead where four generations had lived near Bluffton, Ohio. His health failed in the summer of 1916, and on November 16, he passed to his eternal reward. His oft repeated testimony during the time of his last sickness was, "Jesus is Victor." Brother Lugibihl was married to Miss Katherine Schifferly of Bluffton, Ohio on April 22, 1875, and they were blessed with three children: Rhoda, Hulda who died in infancy, and Walter. This happy family circle was broken by the death of Mrs. Lugibihl in April, 1900, and Mr. Lugibihl later married Miss Bertha Stetler who outlived him by many years. He was the Business Manager of the Fort Wayne Bible Training School from 1904 to 1916 with the exception of an interval of four years. Mr. Lugibihl is well- remembered for his happy Christian disposition, his consistent victorious life, and his effective soul-winning. Although an ordained Christian minister, he never posed as a preacher. He loved to conduct praise and testimony meetings and spent several years in mission work in different cities. His humility and lowliness was reflected in a testimony which he often gave, "I feel I am just like a switch engine in the railroad yards, picking up a car here and

there, getting them in line, and later a big locomotive comes along and takes the train to its destination." He fell asleep in Jesus, Nov. 16, 1916, and was buried on Lugibihl lot at Maple Grove Cemetery, Bluffton, Ohio.

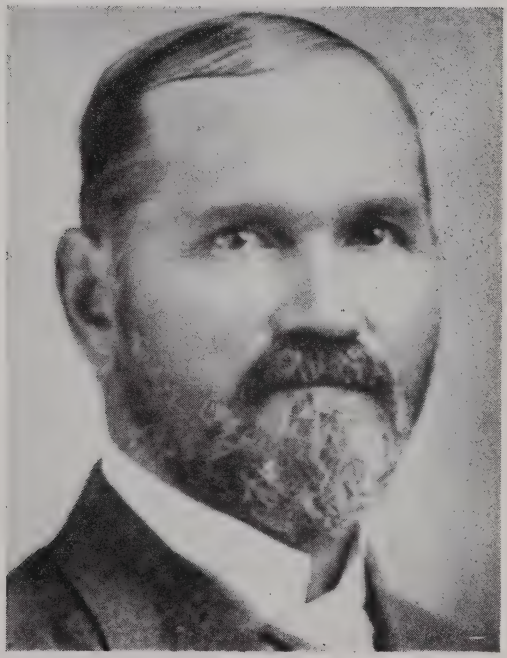
DANIEL Y. SCHULTZ

Daniel Y. Schultz was born near Clayton, Berks County, Pennsylvania, on January 8, 1865. He was converted at eleven years of age and became a member of the Evangelical Association. His religious tendencies and interest in spiritual things was manifested at the early age of twelve, by which time he had read the Bible through four times. He graduated from the State Normal School at Kutztown, Pennsylvania, in 1886, after which he taught school for four years. He was married in 1889 to Miss Flora E. Funk, and the same year they attended the Missionary Training Institute at Nyack, New York, where Mr. Schultz taught English, along with further preparing himself in the study of the Word. In 1892 he became pastor of the Gospel Mission Church at College Point, New York, where he was ordained to the Gospel ministry. He preached and taught the Word in both the English and German languages.

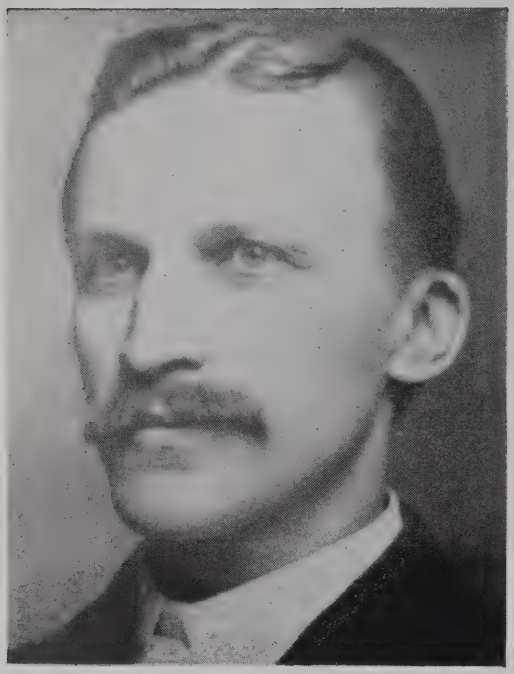
Mr. and Mrs. Schultz and their daughter Esther moved to Bluffton, Ohio in 1896, where Mr. Schultz became associated with the Bethany Bible Institute as a teacher and later as superintendent. It was in Bluffton that a fellowship with the Lugibihls, Ramseyers, and others was begun which was strengthened and hallowed across many years. He became the first superintendent of the Fort Wayne Bible Training School, a position which he capably held from 1904 to 1911, after having served on the Building Committee.

Mr. Schultz was a capable administrator and ef-

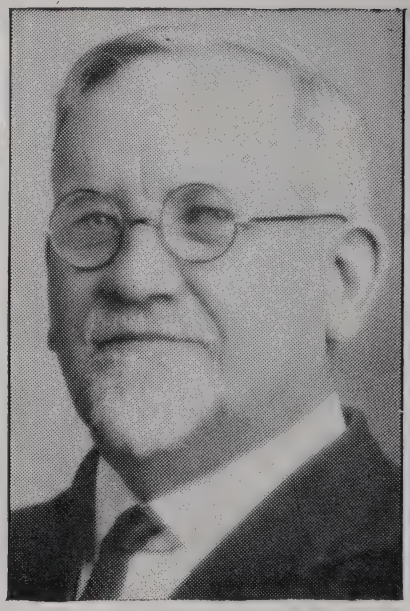
REV. J. E. RAMSEYER



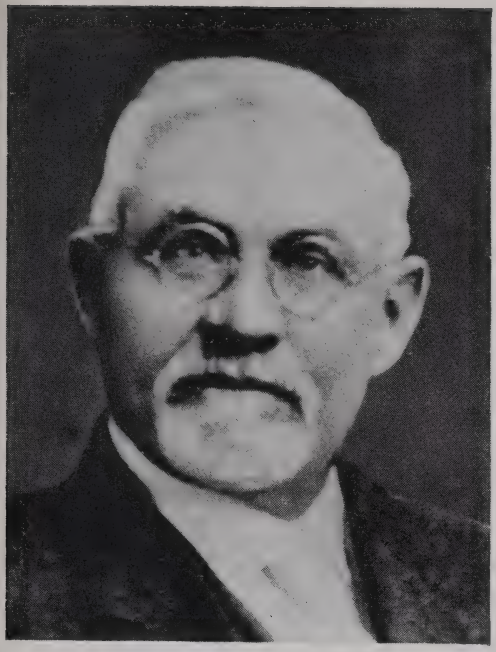
REV. B. P. LUGIBIHL



REV. D. Y. SCHULTZ



REV. WM. EGLE



REV. DAVID ROTH

REV. HENRY ROTH

EARLY PICTURE OF ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, NOW SCHULTZ HALL

ficiently and economically handled all of the affairs of the school in its early years. He was a strict disciplinarian, a versatile leader, a strong teacher of the Word, and a respected servant of his Lord. Both Mr. and Mrs. Schultz had thrust upon them the difficult problems of organization, not only of the educational program but also of the household work. Strictest economy had to be followed because of the $25,000 indebtedness hanging over the struggling school.

In the denominational program of the Missionary Church Association, Mr. Schultz sensed the need of an English publication, and it was under his capable leadership that *The Missionary Worker* came into existence. He was editor of the religious periodical from 1904 to 1911. His vision and aggressiveness also led to the organization of the First Missionary Church in Fort Wayne where he served as the first pastor until 1911. He served on the Missionary Committee of the Association in its early years and was also used extensively in a teaching ministry.

Mr. Schultz resigned his position in Fort Wayne in 1911, and in succeeding years taught during brief periods at several other Bible schools. During his later years he became the victim of spinal sclerosis which gradually incapacitated him for public work. He was forced to retire from his public ministry in the fall of 1917, and a little more than a year later on December 26, 1918, he quietly fell asleep in Jesus at the age of twelve days less than fifty-four years. Memorial services were conducted in Fort Wayne, Indiana and in Berne, Indiana, and his body was laid to rest in the M.R.E. Cemetery near Berne. Later the body was removed to the side of his wife in the Union Cemetery in Bally, Berks County, Pennsylvania, to await the glorious resurrection, a truth which he loved to teach.

DAVID ROTH

David Roth was born near Grabill, Indiana on March 15, 1859, and went to be with the Lord on July 6, 1930, at the age of seventy-one years and four months. On February 23, 1882, he was married to Magdalena Goldsmith. Their home was blessed with two sons and eight daughters. The conducting of the daily family altar where the Word of God was read and prayers were offered was with unbroken regularity.

In his twenty-first year, Mr. Roth received Christ as his personal Savior and joined the Defenseless Mennonite Church near Grabill, Indiana. He was called to the ministry and ordained in 1887 by the laying on of the hands of Rev. Chris Egle and Rev. Joseph Gerig. He served as pastor of the Mennonite Church near Grabill where he was ordained until the founding of the Missionary Church Association in 1898. He then withdrew from the Mennonite Church to pastor the new church which worshipped in various places until the erection of a building in Grabill, Indiana. This work was organized in 1901 and Mr. Roth continued as pastor until 1908. After resigning as pastor, he continued making the church his spiritual home, assisting in every way possible. He remained a member of the official board of the church until his death.

From the beginning of the Missionary Church Association, Mr. Roth gave generously of his time and means in the support of both home and foreign work. He held several official positions, served on the General Committee, and was a trustee of the Association at the time of his death. He was one of the six men who helped to select the site of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, and demonstrated remarkable judgment in financial and spiritual matters as they related to the institution.

Mr. Roth was a lover of God's Word and a student of prophecy and the second advent of Christ. He carried a burden constantly for and longed to see "an old-time revival." He was "a Christian of unimpeachable character, of deep convictions, and a kind disposition."

Joseph E. Ramseyer

Joseph E. Ramseyer was born on February 7, 1869, at New Hamburg, Waterloo County, Ontario, Canada. He was the second of five children, and he was left fatherless at the early age of four. Early in his life there was instilled in him a true love for the Bible and he finished reading the Bible through for the first time at the age of twelve. His love for the Word of God persisted throughout his life, and he loved to share his golden discoveries of truth with others. He was converted at the age of sixteen while following a plow on his grandfather's farm near Zurich, Ontario, Canada. In July, 1891, he came to a crisis in his spiritual life and the hunger and yearnings of his soul were met by a mighty baptism of the Holy Spirit which occured in the "willow bushes" on the farm near Elkton, Michigan.

After moving from Zurich, Ontario, Canada to Elkton, Michigan, in the spring of 1890, and after experiencing "the gift of the Holy Spirit" in the willow bushes about a year later, Joseph Ramseyer began to minister and preach in a small way in his home community. Because of the success in these earlier efforts, his ministry soon spread to other centers. With a widening ministry opening before him, he was ordained in March, 1892, in the Elkton, Mich., Defenseless Mennonite Church which he had helped to erect. His earlier years were years of intensive evangelistic labors

and he traveled widely with rich blessing upon his ministry. He was the first superintendent of the Bethany Bible Institute established in Bluffton, Ohio, in November, 1895, and superintendent and instructor in the Bible School established by the Missionary Church Association at the same location in 1904. He was associated throughout the rest of his life with the school after it was moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana. He filled the office of General Superintendent in 1911, and subsequent to that year, the office of President. He also served as President of the Missionary Church Association from 1900 to 1944. Mr. Ramseyer was an honorary vice president of the Christian and Missionary Alliance for many years, and carried on a wide and influencial ministry in other denominations.

On October 27, 1896, Mr. Ramseyer was married to Miss Katherine Zeller, a teacher in the public schools in Bluffton, Ohio, and also a teacher of English in the Bethany Home Bible Institute. Their married life, although filled with joy, intense activity, and much blessing, was brief, and Mrs. Ramseyer was called to higher service on July 31, 1899. She was laid to rest at Bluffton, Ohio. On May 1, 1902, Mr. Ramseyer was married a second time to Miss Macy Garth of Union City, Tennessee. She shared with him forty-two years of arduous travel, sacrificial labor, and intensive public ministry.

After two years of declining health, Mr. Ramseyer quietly passed away at his home at 719 West Rudisill Boulevard across the street from the campus of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, on January 25, 1944. He was buried from Founders' Memorial Auditorium of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, and laid to rest in Lindenwood Cemetery in Fort Wayne.

J. E. Ramseyer was a noble saint, a humble servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a man of prayer, a student of the Word, a father in Israel, a giant in faith, an incomparable example of Christian virtues in all that he said and did. Because he had "no joy in it," he refused the honorary degree of doctor of divinity. He sought always to act so as to humble himself and to exalt his Lord. Mr. Ramseyer had a regal bearing, a dignified manner, and a most gracious disposition. He was "a wise counsellor in guiding administrative affairs, a spiritual father to many, a courageous but gentle defender of the faith."

William Egle

William Egle, a native of Wuerttemberg, Germany, was born on October 31, 1860. He came to the United States with his parents at the age of thirteen years and later became a naturalized citizen. He was married on February 1, 1883, to Miss Phoebe Augstin and their home was blessed with nine children. Mrs. Egle passed away on January 19, 1902, at Berne, Indiana, and Mr. Egle later married Miss Judith Schindler, who also preceded him in death on May 30th, 1930. To this later union were born three children. Mr. Egle preached the Gospel for over sixty years, and went to be with his Lord on July 31, 1944, at Stratton, Nebraska. His body was laid to rest in the cemetery near the Eden Missionary church.

William Egle was chosen to serve in the ministry of the Central Illinois Conference of Mennonites, and after four years of such service, he was genuinely converted. Later he united with the Defenseless Mennonite Conference where he found warm and close fellowship with J. E. Ramseyer, Jacob C. Schmucker of Kansas, and other brethren. He was later associated with J. A. Sprunger in orphanage work in Berne, Indiana, and al-

so in Gospel publication work and in evangelism. For a number of years he served as editor of *"Botschafter des Heils in Christo,"* the German organ of the M. C. A. He had a good German education, was a voluminous reader, a clear thinker, and an able preacher of the Word.

Mr. Egle was a member of the first building committee of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, and a loyal friend of the Institute throughout his long life. He held several pastorates in the Missionary Church Association, served on the General Committee for many years, and was vice-president of the denomination. In his later years he served as District Superintendent of the Mid-Western District, a position which he held until his eighty-fifth year. He was a zealous worker even in old age, "an inspiring leader with a youthful heart, a pioneer with far-reaching vision, a man of understanding and sympathy." His buoyant spirit and spiritual ardor were an inspiration to all younger ministers who knew him and respected his leadership.

HENRY ROTH

Henry Roth, the last member of the sextet of founders to go to his reward, was born near Grabill, Indiana, on March 17, 1866. In his youth, he felt called to the ministry, but no revelation of the fact was made until after his conversion in 1887. He was baptized and became a member of the Defenseless Mennonite Church where he became active early in Sunday School and church work.

On December 18, 1888, Mr. Roth was married to Leah Gerig, and they were blessed with nine children, one dying in infancy, three of their sons becoming ministers of the Gospel and three daughters becoming wives of ministers. Five of their children are alumni of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute.

A crisis in Mr. Roth's life evidently came at about the same time that it came in the lives of others in the Mennonite church. He writes in an autobiographical sketch of a deeper vision and new light, "It was previous to 1898 that there came some dear men of God with a larger and fuller vision of the deeper truths of Scripture and missions, one being B. P. Lugibihl, who was a member of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, J. A. Sprunger of 'Light and Hope,' also Miss Mathilda Combs, a missionary to Africa, and Rev. J. E. Ramseyer." On June 11, 1899, he was ordained as a minister, and was called to the pastorate of the Missionary Church in Grabill, Indiana in 1907. He served this church until 1920.

Mr. Roth served faithfully across many years in denominational offices. He was district superintendent of Indiana from 1909 to 1924, and also served as a member of the General Committee during the same period with the exception of one year. He was a Trustee of the Association from 1930 until his death after a brief illness on November 16, 1946. Mr. Roth was an exemplary father, a faithful pastor, a lover of the Word, a wise counsellor, and a respected leader.

There is something solemn about the passing of a generation of men, strong men of faith and vision, wise men of truth and understanding, loyal men of conviction and stability, brave men of adventure and courage. Their burdens then must fall upon the shoulders of an oncoming generation; the truth they upheld must become conviction in the hearts of those who follow; the vision and insight which motivated them must propel others. To become faithful followers of the pioneers is the challenge to those who remain.

CHAPTER VI

The Growth and Progress of The Fort Wayne Bible Institute

The Fort Wayne Bible Institute, strategically located in the historic city of Fort Wayne, Indiana, is at the hub of the great industrial Middle-west. Through forty-six years of history, the Institute has grown into one of the leading institutions of its kind, and has gained a wide reputation for its program and training. It is impossible to write all of the history of any institution which is used of God in the Christian education of young people. Too much of that history has been written into lives which have multiplied themselves in blessing and godly influence upon others. To write the total account would demand a reckoning with every student and every subsequent ministry of such student. The work of the Spirit is first of all upon the hearts of men, and while men look upon the outward appearances and write history accordingly, it is God who looks upon the heart and keeps the deeper, more significant record.

Name

The name of the institution was carefully considered from the beginning and when it was called *The Fort Wayne Bible Training School,* it was with due regard to a number of important factors. Far more important than designating the location was the emphasis upon the type of school. It was to be without apologies a Bible school where the one Book was learned, lived, and loved. It was also a training school where stu-

GENERAL COMMITTEE IN SESSION, August 1906, at Berne, Indiana.

Left to right, D. C. Stucky, J. E. Ramseyer, D. Y. Schultz, Joel Rupp, B. P. Lugibihl, David Schindler, Joseph Egly, A. M. Clauser, C. W. Oyer.

CONFERENCE GROUP AT BERNE, INDIANA, AUGUST 1906

Front row, left to right, E. F. Clauser, M. E. Ramseyer, W. H. Lugibihl, D. C. Rupp, G. R. Schroeder, A. E. Witmer, John Merriman, Mrs. S. J. Grabill, Mr. Grabill, H. H. Amstutz, Henry Dyck, J. J. Fliginger, S. D. Burkey.

Second row, Barbara Eicher-Cox, Thomas M. Chalmers, C. W. Oyer, B. P. Lugibihl, Mrs. Lugibihl, Mrs. A. E. Funk, Mr. Funk, Joseph Egly, C. H. Chandler, J. E. Rameyer, Mrs. Ramseyer, Mrs. D. Y. Schultz, Mrs. A. M. Clauser, Maggie Roth, Mr. Clauser.

Third row, Chris Fliginger, Mrs. Fliginger, Mrs. Thiessen, H. C. Thiessen, John S. Regier, M. S. Schrock, S. S. Gerig, Ezra Rupp, P. L. Eicher, Mrs. Eicher, Mose Hondrich, David Roth, Sam Gerig, Mose Stuckey, E. A. Schultz, A. D. Welty, D. C. Stucky, A. A. Smith, Sol. Klopfenstein, E. Kuhnle, David Schindler.

Dining Department at Berne, Indiana, Conference, August 1906.

Front row, left to right, Henry Roth, Mrs. Leonard Lehman, Eva Erhart, Mrs. Norman Hirschy, Emil Erhart, Salome Schug Kuhnle, Caroline Hirschy, Flora Sauder Schwartz, Martha Schug, Simon Schindler, Ada Reusser Bixler.

Seated, Mrs. John Schindler, Mrs. David Schindler, Mrs. Peter Steiner, Mrs. Peter Stuckey.

Standing, Sarah Steiner, Edna Stuckey Wittwer, Katie Yoder, Rose Hirschy, Amanda Egly Sprunger, Adella Schindler Rich, Katie Zehr Augsburger, Rachel Hirschy Lugibihl, Lizzie Schindler, Clara Schug Hirschy, Sarah Schindler, Tillie Schindler Zimmerman, Addie Roth Regier, Ellen Schindler, Mrs. David Hirschy, Martha Moser Schindler, Mrs. Sam Schindler, Katherine Liechty, Mrs. Emil Erhart, Sarah Zehr Beitler, Mrs. Christ Liechty, Andrew Roth, Simon Zimmerman, Menno Hirschy, Sam Schindler, Martha Hirschy Runyon, Mathilda Hirschy Sprunger.

In the rear Joe Schindler and John Stuckey.

REV. HENRY ZEHR
Our First Missionary

dents were to be disciplined in the ways and work of God. The Fort Wayne Bible Training School was founded "for the teaching of students of the Word and the training of students in the work." So read the slogan of the school until 1912. The later motto of the school, "Training for Service and Service in Training," embodied the same principle and has been used to the present time.

In keeping with times and trends, the General Conference of the Missionary Church Association in 1930, changed the name to the *Fort Wayne Bible Institute.* In 1950, the name was again changed and became the *Fort Wayne Bible College.* While the changes represented certain progress and advancement, the basic aims and objectives of the institution remained the same with sound academic and classroom work being combined with practical field work.

CHARACTER

Interdenominational. The Institute from its inception has opened its doors to young people of all denominations. This has provided an enriching fellowship in which students from more than twenty-five denominations live and work together.

The Board of Trustees has always been composed of men from various denominations. At least one-third of the Board has been made up of representatives at different times from the following churches: The Christian and Missionary Alliance, The United Missionary Church, The Evangelical Mennonite Conference, The Methodist Church, and the Christian Union Church.

The same interdenominational pattern has been followed in the choice of the faculty. Many excellent teachers from other denominations have come to en-

rich the program of the Institute through their teaching and influence.

Co-educational. The Fort Wayne Bible Institute has always received both men and women to be trained for Christian service. It has been generally true that considerably more women have enrolled than men, and many of both have gotten their training and have gone to the ends of the earth with the message of saving grace. The Institute has fostered a wholesome social life and friendly relations between men and women have often resulted in the uniting of lives for the glory of God. From such unions have come children to the third generation who have returned to the Alma Mater of their parents and grandparents to obtain their training for the service of the Lord.

Inspirational. Education at the Fort Wayne Bible Institute has coupled inspiration with information, the warming of the heart with the training of the mind. There has always been an attempt to deepen the spiritual experience of the student as well as to give him intellectual strength and breadth. The devotional program, the weekly missionary challenges, the prayer meetings, the stimulating chapel services, the emphasis and place given to individual Bible study and prayer, the dormitory prayer groups, all combine to awaken interest, to arouse enthusiasm, and to create zeal. A conscious effort is made to lead every student into a crisis experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. These factors work together to set knowledge on fire and to make of the students flaming evangels.

PERSONNEL

Board of Trustees. Until 1912, the governing board of the Institute was smaller than in later years and was known as the Executive Committee. Men who

served on the Executive Committee during these early years were: J. E. Ramseyer, B. P. Lugibihl, William Egle, C. W. Oyer, D. Y. Schultz, David Roth, Christian Hirschy, J. D. Williams, A. E. Witmer, and H. C. Thiessen.

In 1912, the Executive Committee became the School Board, and the men who served on the Board that year were: J. E. Ramseyer, C. W. Oyer, J. D. Williams, David Roth, Christian Hirschy, A. E. Witmer, and H. C. Thiessen. Others who have served on the Governing Board and who have helped to shape the policies and program of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute are: A. W. Roffe, S. S. Gerig, P. W. Philpott, B. F. Leightner, J. H. Allen, W. H. Lugibihl, Noah Schumacher, J. Gregory Mantle, Christopher Burnett, R. E. Neighbor, A. B. Yoder, G. R. Schroeder, William Egle, Noah Wagler, C. R. Egle, L. H. Ziemer, P. L. Eicher, S. J. Grabill, H. E. Tropf, H. M. Shuman, A. M. Clauser, H. A. Dickman, J. K. Gerig, J. A. Ringenberg, Chris L. Eicher, C. J. Gerig, T. H. Robertson, M. N. Amstutz, S. A. Lehman, C. E. Rediger, William Hygema, J. S. Wood, Harvey Mitchell, Quinten Everest, Armin Steiner, Jared F. Gerig, J. Francis Chase, Shirl Hatfield, Warren E. Manges, H. E. Wiswell, John Tuckey, Robert Strubhar, Mark Burgess, Safara A. Witmer, Cyril H. Eicher, G. C. McKibben, Milo A. Rediger, Edison Habegger, Homer Gettle, F. W. Lagerholm, Clyde W. Taylor, Henry Amstutz.

From 1930 to 1939, a smaller committee of Trustees usually composed of five members, was in existence for the purpose of holding and administering the physical property of the Institute. Those serving on this committee as trustees beginning with 1930 were: S. A. Lehman, John L. Ramseyer, C. C. Welty, David Roth, Noah Schumacher, Henry Roth. There was only one

change in this committee in the nine years of its existence.

In 1938, the Bible Institute was incorporated separately from the Missionary Church Association, giving it a solid legal foundation of its own. It was chartered as a theological institute with the privilege of offering academic and college courses and granting suitable awards for such work. Since 1938, the Institute has been governed by a Board of Trustees numbering twelve with the President as an *ex officio* member. The articles of incorporation state that this governing body shall hold the property in trust for the use of the Bible Institute, and in the exercise of its trust "shall be directly responsible to the General Conference of the Missionary Church Association."

The present Board of Trustees consists of Mr. Shirl Hatfield, Chairman; Rev. Cyril Eicher, Secretary; Mr. Sol Lehman, Treasurer; Rev. Edison Habegger, Mr. J. Francis Chase, Dr. Milo Rediger, Rev. G. C. McKibben, Rev. C. J. Gerig, Dr. Clyde Taylor, Mr. Henry Amstutz, Dr. Homer Gettle, and Dr. S. A. Witmer, President of the Institute.

Administration. The office of *President* did not come into existence until 1912, when J. E. Ramseyer was appointed the first President of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute. This office he held until his death on January 25, 1944. He was succeeded at his death by J. A. Ringenberg, who had been vice-president of the Missionary Church Association. Mr. Ringenberg held the office as *acting* president for approximately a year and a half along with the duties as president of the Association. The growing responsibilities in both offices made it evident for several years that a division was needed and that it would be impossible for one man to bear the burdens of leadership of both the Association

and the Institute. Therefore in March, 1945, the Board of Trustees appointed S. A. Witmer as president of the Bible Institute. After being released from the chaplaincy of the United States Air Force, he assumed his duties at the Institute on June 1, 1945. Many forward moves have been initiated under his aggressive leadership and the growth of the Institute in all phases of its work and program is a testimony to an enlarged vision and the blessing of God upon it.

The office of *superintendent* preceded that of president from 1905 to 1912. Mr. and Mrs. D. Y. Schultz were named the first superintendents of the Institute and gave wise over-all supervision to the program for the first seven years. Much of the success of these earlier years in laying a solid foundation in sound policy and practice must be credited to the far-reaching vision and planning of Mr. and Mrs. Schultz. They were succeeded in 1911 by J. E. Ramseyer who was appointed General Superintendent, and by C. W. Oyer, Assistant Superintendent. In 1912 when Mr. Ramseyer was appointed to the office of president, Mr. Oyer became the superintendent of the Institute. He held this office until its discontinuance in 1923. Through all of these earlier years the superintendents carried much of the entire load of administration because of Mr. Ramseyer's extensive evangelistic travels.

It was also in 1911, that the office of *principal* was inaugurated, and Rev. J. D. Williams, pastor of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Tabernacle in Indianapolis, Indiana, was called to fill this position. For the first year, he held his pastorate in Indianapolis and commuted between the two cities. In 1914, Mr. and Mrs. Williams were given an urgent call to the Missionary Training Institute in Nyack, New York, which they accepted. Rev. James H. Allen, who had come to the Insti-

tute as an instructor in 1912, was appointed to succeed Mr. Williams as principal. Mr. Allen served faithfully in this capacity for five years and then left the Institute to enter foreign missionary service in Paraguay, South America. H. C. Thiessen followed him in the office of principal until 1923 when B. F. Leightner was appointed. Mr. Leightner served in this office for seven years until its discontinuance in 1930.

In 1930, the office of principal was changed to the office of *dean* and B. F. Leightner became the first dean of the Institute, holding that administrative position for five years. S. A. Witmer succeeded him in this position which he held for eight years. Mr. Witmer was given a leave of absence in 1943 to enter the chaplaincy, and in his absence, Loyal R. Ringenberg served as acting dean for two years. When Mr. Witmer returned to the Institute as president in 1945, Jared F. Gerig of Phoenix, Arizona, was appointed as dean.

The distinct office of *registrar* did not come into existence until 1931 and S. A. Witmer filled the office for two years. After an absence of two years, from 1933 to 1935, to fill the pastorate of the First Missionary Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana, he was recalled to the Institute as dean-registrar. He carried the double responsibilities for eight years until he was released to enter the chaplaincy in 1943. B. F. Leightner filled the office as acting registrar for one year, and was then appointed as registrar. Mr. Leightner gave many years of faithful and valuable service to the Institute. He was graduated in the class of 1913, served as a part-time instructor from 1914 to 1920 while pastoring the First Missionary Church of Fort Wayne, joined the staff again in 1923, served as principal from 1923 to 1930 and as dean from 1930 to 1935. He was a full-time instructor from 1935 to 1943, when he assumed the full respon-

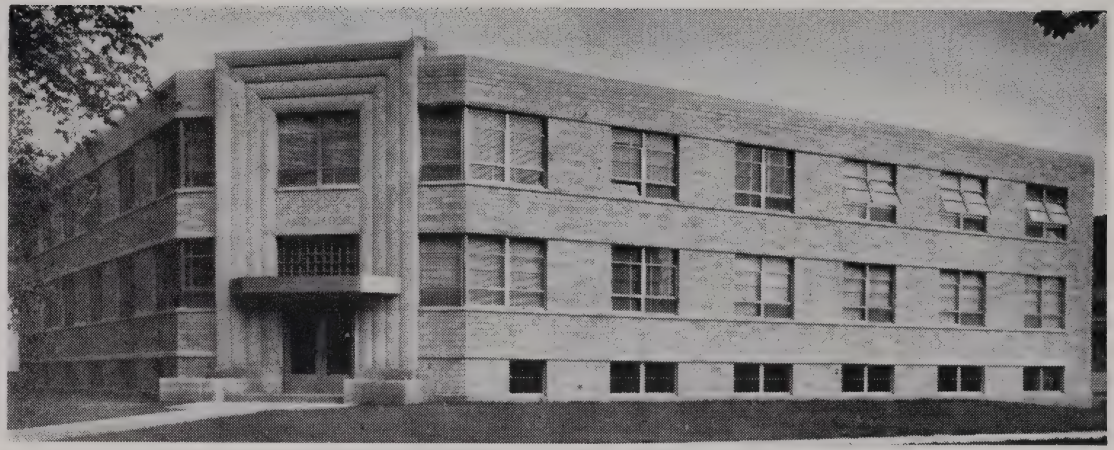
sibilities of the registrar's office. He has given thirty-three years to the work of the Institute in one capacity or another and has left the mark of his kindly spirit and godly life, as well as his inspirational teaching, upon the lives of hundreds who have sought his classes through these years. Without warning, his health began to fail in the early months of 1950 and he was translated to higher service on March 31, 1950. His homegoing left a great gap in the ranks, both in the M. C. A. and the Bible Institute.

B. P. Lugibihl came to the Institute in 1904 to become the first *Business Manager* of the new institution. Four years later, the Lugibihls were given a call to open and operate a Christian Home for tubercular patients in Phoenix, Arizona. They accepted this call and for four years conducted Bethany Home, so called in memory of Bethany Home in Bluffton, Ohio. During the four years absence of the Lugibihls, A. K. Schultz served as business manager. In 1912, the Lugibihls were recalled from Phoenix, Arizona, at which time Mr. Lugibihl was reappointed as business manager and Mrs. Lugibihl as matron. B. P. Lugibihl was called to his eternal reward in the fall of 1916, and his son Walter, who was well acquainted with the work was invited to complete the year. This he did after resigning his pastorate in Lima, Ohio. The School Board in its meeting in the spring of 1917 appointed Adam Bixler of Pandora, Ohio, to that position and he carried faithfully the responsibility of this work until 1922. He was followed in the office by M. E. Ramseyer, who served for one year, Walter H. Lugibihl, two years, and by P. L. Eicher, who is completing his twenty-fourth year. Mr. Eicher's many years of untiring effort, after spending two terms as a missionary in India, constitutes an outstanding record of

achievement and service. His devotion to the work, his undeviating faithfulness, and congenial and cooperative spirit, all have left their imprint upon the institution as well as upon hundreds of lives.

The position of *treasurer* was combined with that of business manager in the early years, until the appointment of Mrs. C. W. Oyer in 1911. She held the office until 1923, when it was again combined with the work of the business manager, and M. E. Ramseyer, W. H. Lugibihl, and P. L. Eicher, in succession, carried the responsibilities of both offices. The work was again divided in 1939 when S. A. Lehman, president of the National Mill Supply Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana, was appointed treasurer. Mr. Lehman has held this position to the present time and has given wise business counsel and strong administrative leadership, both on the Board of Trustees and on the Committee on Administration.

Miss Lillian Zeller, who joined the faculty of the Institute in 1923, became the first *Dean of Women* in 1931. After holding this position for eight years, in addition to teaching English and Speech, she was appointed Librarian in 1941, the position she holds at the present time. Miss Zeller has served the Institute in these various capacities for twenty-seven years. The dignity and devotion of her exemplary life has been an inspiration to all of her associates across these many years. In 1939, Miss Martha Amstutz became Dean of Women, and she was followed by Miss Hazel Butz, Miss Leona Lehner, and Miss Helen Zorb, each of whom served one year. The present Dean of Women, Mrs. Ione Fitch, was appointed in 1946. Mrs. Fitch came to the Institute with a splendid background of experience and training. By godly example and



RAMSEYER MEMORIAL BUILDING

Erected, 1949-50

Dedicated Sunday, August 13, 1950

REV. J. E. RAMSEYER in his later years reading his old Bible

THE CENTRAL DISTRICT ANNUAL WORKERS CONFERENCE,

APRIL 8-10, 1947

Taken at the Mt. Olive Missionary Church, Peoria, Illinois.

Reading from left to right, J. J. Klopfenstein, Tillman Habegger, M. N. Amstutz, Mrs. Amstutz, W. H. Lugibihl, Mrs. S. D. Burkey, Clarence I. Birkey, Arnold Schmidt, Mrs. Schmidt, Mrs. Lyle Steiner, Lyle Steiner, C. J. Gerig, Mrs. Gerig.

Second row, Mrs. J. J. Klopfenstein, Glen Head, Ellis Roth, Mrs. Roth, Mrs. W. H. Lugibihl, Dan Demmin, Mrs. Eicher, Oscar Eicher, J. A. Ringenberg, Mrs. Ringenberg, Jesse S. Ringenberg, Mrs. Shisler, Albert Hager.

Third row, Mrs. Teale, J. W. Teale, Louis Strahm, Mrs. Strahm, Mrs. Rohrs, Mrs. Leonard, Mrs. Demmin, Armin Steiner, Mrs. Steiner, Mrs. C. D. Steiner, Karl Kurlin, Mrs. Wiederkehr, Mrs. Kurlin, C. H. Wiederkehr, Mrs. Albro, Arthur Albro, Roy Ramseyer, Joseph Shisler, Winfred Amstutz, William Agin, R. H. Baily, ————, Simon Schindler.

Fourth row, C. B. Vollmar, John Rohrs, Gerald Ringenberg, Tillman Amstutz, E. B. Leonard, Randall Rice, Forest Kuhn, Vincent Rupp, Mrs. Brock, Eldon Mitchell, Mrs. V. Rupp, Harold Warner, Robert Strubhar, Clinton Moser, J. Gaylord Lehman.

At doorway, E. F. Clauser, Mrs. Clauser, Lizzie Hilty, Mrs. Cox, Mrs. C. H. Eicher, C. H. Eicher.

In doorway, ————, Mrs. Hewitt, George Hewitt, Mrs. Caddy, John Caddy, William Caulkins.

Sixteen registered out of town Conference Members had already returned home when this picture was taken.

REV. B. F. LEIGHTNER, JR.

Called to be with the Lord, March 31, 1950, after 37 years of faithful service at the Fort Wayne Bible Institute.

wise spiritual guidance, she has been made a blessing to many under her care.

Long before a Dean of Women arrived on the scene at the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, another, intimately known to many as" Mother" Lugibihl, carried the responsibilities of a house-mother and matron. Mrs. B. P. Lugibihl, came to the Institute with her husband in 1904. She had the supervision of the kitchen and dining room in these earlier years, but in 1912 she was appointed the matron of the one and only building on the campus at that time, the old Administration Building facing South Wayne Avenue. In 1914 she was given a little more dignified title, "Superintendent of Ladies," but the more homely and intimate designation of "matron" came back to stick the next year. "Mother" Lugibihl continued as matron of the Administration Building until she resigned in 1935. Mrs. Lugibihl resided in this building after the death of Mr. Lugibihl in 1916 and continued to make her home there until September, 1945, when because of ill health, she was moved to the home of her son, Rev. Walter Lugibihl, and daughter, Mrs. Rhoda Hinkey, at 3727 Shady Court, adjoining the campus of the Institute. She fell asleep in her Savior on September 4, 1947. Mrs. Lugibihl was a radiant personality with the glow of heaven on her face and the praises of her Lord continually on her lips. She was a mother in Israel and without question, her spiritual children, scattered to the uttermost parts of the earth, will rise up and call her blessed.

The office of *Dean of Men* was left vacant for many years and has been filled for the first time in the present school year of 1949-50. Mr. Elmer Neuenschwander, an alumnus of the Institute, and a graduate of Asbury College and Seminary, returned to the Insti-

tute as a member of the faculty in 1948, and was appointed Dean of Men in 1949.

An addition to the campus and the increased number of buildings created a need for a *Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds.* The care and maintenance of the physical property, until the summer of 1945, was under the supervision and management of the Business Manager. At that time, Rev. Carl Parlee was invited to take the position of Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds. After serving for two years, he resigned to give full time to the pastorate of the Harvester Missionary Church in Fort Wayne. Mr. Francis DeCausin, of Detroit, Michigan, became his successor in 1947.

Faculty. It has been a consistent policy of the Board of Trustees of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute to select the best qualified men and women possible to serve on the faculty. Spirituality has never been sacrificed for scholarship although learning and ability have always been considered and sought. It is totally impossible to give due credit in this brief history to all of the godly and scholarly men and women who have used their teaching gifts in the preparation and training of young people at the Institute. The earliest records of the first years lists the following as regular teachers: J. E. Ramseyer, T. J. Keith, S. H. Stokes, William Egle, C. W. Oyer, D. Y. Schultz, Prof. Edwin J. Germann, Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer, Miss Carrie H. Bolton, H. C. Thiessen and Miss Tena Goosen. Dr. Harlan P. Welton joined the faculty in 1908 and gave full time to Bible instruction until 1912. Rev. and Mrs. T. Pliny Potts came from Pittsburgh and joined the teaching staff in 1909. They taught only for two years, but while pastoring a city church, rejoined the staff from 1923 to 1929. Rev. Jacob Hygema, of the Mennonite Breth-

ren in Christ, came to the Institute from a pastorate in Nebraska, and gave full-time to teaching from 1920 to 1930. Rev. and Mrs. Byron G. Smith of the Evangelical Church left the pastorate in Avilla, Indiana, to join the teaching staff in 1925. Mr. Smith taught Bible, Church History, and Homiletics, until his sudden death in 1934. Mrs. Smith has remained on the faculty to the present time, giving twenty-five years of valuable and competent service in the teaching of languages and other subjects. Rev. Loyal R. Ringenberg began his teaching at the Institute in 1933, in the fields of History and Apologetics, and served faithfully both as a teacher and administrator until 1946. Dr. H. S. Miller, widely known author and teacher, taught Greek and Apologetics for two years from 1932 to 1934.

Others who have given faithful service to the Lord and to the teaching ministry in the Institute, especially in the departments of Bible and Christian Education, are: Edith Holsworth, William M. Smith, Louise C. Blume, Ida C. Rogers, A. J. Harms, Salome Schug, Mrs. C. W. Oyer, Mary A. Perkins, L. H. Ziemer, W. H. Lugibihl, Esther Roth, Joshua Stauffer, Myrle Gaskill, Harold Wiswell, Paul Updike, Earl B. Fletcher, Bertha Leitner, Hazel Butz, J. Warren Slote, Reginald E. Shepley, J. Pritchard Amstutz, Helen P. White, Floyd A. Shank, Clarence J. Huffman, Harvey L. Mitchell, Edith Ehlke, O. Carl Brown, Violet Munter, Frieda Buchen, Anna Vedevig, and Roy Birkey. Much more could be said of the outstanding teaching ministries of those who have divided their time between administration and teaching, whose records of service have been written in connection with their service as administrators.

In the field of sacred music, Professor C. A. Gerber has established an outstanding record for teaching in

one institution. He began his teaching at the Fort Wayne Bible Institute in 1911, and has now completed his thirty-ninth year. Professor Gerber's life and testimony have been a rich blessing to many who have learned to sing well under his capable instruction. He has been a patient, persistent, and practical teacher of voice culture, and in all of his work has labored faithfully as unto the Lord. In the years preceding 1911, Edwin J. Germann, Mark Evans, and Ezra Rupp taught vocal music. Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer was the piano teacher in the first years of the Institute's history, and Miss Eva Quaiffe taught instrumental music from 1913 to 1916. Miss Stella Bixel, Miss Laura Amstutz, and Miss Esther Pohlmann followed in succession, the latter serving from 1919 to 1922. Others who have taught piano have been Miss Rosina Ramseyer, Raymond Weaver, Howard Skinner, Ira A. Gerig, Ruth Bixel, Robert L. Pfundstein, Mrs. O. E. Steiner, Olga Hvizdak, Mrs. Dorothy Sollenberger, June Swaback, and Alton Cronk. Professor Oliver Steiner came to the Institute in 1944 to become Director of the School of Sacred Music. With a fine education in music and many years of experience in choral conducting and department administration, he has led this department of the Institute to an excellent record, both as to reputation and achievement. Those associated with him on the music staff are Ira Gerig, B.M., C. A. Gerber, Miss June Swaback, B.S.M., and Alton Cronk, A.M.

BUILDINGS AND CAMPUS

Administration Building. The first building to be erected has long been known as the "Ad Building." In 1949, the administrative offices were moved into Bethany Hall and it became necessary to change the name. On August 19, the Board of Trustees decided that it would be fitting to name it after the founder

who had planned and labored more than any other to bring it into existence. Therefore, at that time it was renamed Schultz Hall, in honor of Rev. D. Y. Schultz, the distinguished co-founder and first superintendent of the Institute.

Schultz Hall was the center of school life in its entirety from 1904 to 1930. It was constructed as a two-story brick building, with library, classrooms, kitchen, dining hall, laundry, chapel, offices, reception room, and forty dormitory rooms, equipped for two occupants each. The building was 145 feet long and 85 feet wide at the center. A full basement provided for steam heating plant and other facilities. The building was modernized in 1937, and further work along this line was done in 1949. In 1942, the chapel was converted into the library, and later, the kitchen into a Snack Room, the old dining hall into the Audio-Visual Aids Department of the Library, and the serving room into the Book Store. Two entire floors, with the exception of the Library, are being used at the present time for domitory space. It will be remembered that Rev. and Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer lived in rooms 13 and 15 in this building for thirty-two years. They then built a small cottage across the Boulevard from the campus at 719 W. Rudisill Boulevard. The offices of the Missionary Church Association, including the M.C.A. Book Store, have also been housed on the first floor of Schultz Hall for many years.

Bethany Hall. The second building on the Bible Institute campus was erected in 1929-30 at a cost of $60,000. Crowded conditions in all departments of the work made it imperative that additional facilities be provided. At its completion, the building was named Bethany Hall, in remembrance of Bethany Home and Bible Institute, the antecedent of the Fort Wayne Bible

Institute. This two-story brick structure provided two stories for dormitory space with a large reception room in the center of the building on the first floor. The semi-basement was divided into three large and well-lighted classrooms and several utility rooms. Bethany Hall was considered a girls' dormitory until the summer of 1949, when the administrative offices were moved from Schultz Hall to occupy the first floor. The second story is still used for the housing of girls.

The Apartment Annex. A large single dwelling adjoining the campus was purchased in 1937. It was remodeled into five suites of rooms which have been used exclusively for married couples.

Founders' Memorial Hall. The growth of the Music Department in the Institute created a problem for several years. Private lessons demanded space and equipment where practice was possible without creating a disturbance in dormitories and study halls. Plans for a Music Hall were completed in 1938. These plans were endorsed by the Missionary Church Association Conference of that year and some money was raised for the construction of the building. Time proved the inadequacy of these original plans and after the approval of a much larger building, a ground-breaking service was held at the time of the Central District Convention in August, 1941. The beginning of the construction work at that time was felt to have been providential, since a few months later would have meant conflict with the war effort and the inability to obtain vital materials. The building was completed in 1942 at a cost of $110,000, and was named Founders' Memorial in honor of the six men, who through a co-operative vision and effort, became the co-founders of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute.

Founders' Memorial is an imposing brick structure

given over largely to housing the School of Sacred Music. One complete side of the building constitutes a thoroughly modern music hall with twenty-five practice rooms and four studios made of sound-proof construction. It also is equipped with three large classrooms, a chapel seating 600, and a large gymnasium, which combined with the chapel, provides an auditorium seating 1400. Additional facilities in this building include an attractive dining room, a recreation room, a custodian's apartment, and a central office equipped with inter-room and inter-building communication systems.

An engineer's room with all necessary radio equipment, an Orgatron, a new Hammond Concert Organ purchased in 1949, thirty-six pianos, a Magnecorder, six phonographs, excellent record and octavo libraries, and band instruments, all combine to give the Institute fine equipment aimed at meeting the challenge for the finest in musical training.

The cornerstone for this building was laid on October 12, 1941, and the Dedication service was held on May 10, 1942.

Providence Hall. The critical dormitory problem came up for an answer again in 1945. To meet housing needs for seventy girls, construction was begun on a two-story building which was completed in December, 1945, and dedicated on January 13, 1946. Due to the many favorable providences of God manifested at an unfavorable time for building, the dormitory was appropriately named Providence Hall.

Residence Hall. The acquirement of four army buildings from Baer Field in the summer of 1948 made possible the erection of a commodius apartment building at approximately half cost of $55,000. The building

was finished in January, 1949, and provides seven double apartments, five single apartments, and a dispensary. Using the building for faculty housing purposes gave the hall its name without any formality in the matter. It became Residence Hall by nature rather than by formal designation.

South Campus. An unusual opportunity presented itself in the summer of 1946 when the General Conference of the Missionary Church Association approved the purchase of a select plot of ground, thirteen acres in size, located one-half block west of the present campus and on the south side of Rudisill Boulevard. This choice acreage, purchased for $60,000, will provide adequate room for future development and expansion of the growing Institute program.

THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum of the Bible Institute has always combined a sound core of Bible and Theology with a wide choice of related subjects. The earlier curriculum included besides Bible and theology, grammar, speech, penmanship, and music. There was a consistent broadening of the curriculum from the simple offerings of the first years to a well diversified and coordinated program of study. In keeping with true Bible Institute tradition, the major has always been and still remains Bible and Theology. The various fields for the minor include Missions, Christian Education, Practical Theology, Church Secretarial Science, and Sacred Music.

The earlier courses of study covered a period of two years and a diploma was the reward for satisfactory completion of any course. In 1932 the courses of study were lengthened to three years and in 1947 to four years. For the standard three-year courses and

BETHANY HALL ERECTED 1929

FOUNDERS MEMORIAL BUILDING
Erected 1941

CHAPEL

MUSIC STUDIO

PROVIDENCE HALL

the four-year degree courses, high school graduation was a prerequisite. A course has always been designed for non-high school graduates which requires certain high school subjects. It is possible at the present time to take a standard three-year course of study or the four-year program leading either to the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Bible, Bachelor of Religious Education, or Bachelor of Sacred Music. A more extended program of five years leads to the Bachelor of Theology degree.

The tendency in recent years has been to concentrate in the major and minors and to open the courses of study for a wide selection of electives in related fields.

ACCREDITATION

A major development in the Bible Institute and Bible College movement was the organization of the Accrediting Association of Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges. The administration of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute helped to pioneer in this important field of endeavor and the Institute became one of the charter members being accredited by the Association on the collegiate level in 1948. High standards have been a tradition at the Fort Wayne Bible Institute and an effort is consistently made toward raising the level of work done and increasing the efficiency of educational methods used.

ALUMNI

More than a thousand graduates have received their training in the Fort Wayne Bible Institute. The alumni organization known as the Fellowship Circle has not only included those who have graduated from

the Institute, but for many years, those who spent at least one semester in training. In 1948 the condition for membership was changed to attendance for one year. The Fellowship Circle has been a loyal supporter of the work and has engaged in many worthy efforts and projects to enhance the value of the training offered at the Institute.

CHAPTER VII

The Development of the Home Base

The work of the Missionary Church Association in the United States, which is considered the home base, has neither been rapid in its growth nor phenomenal in its character. Under conservative leadership, and through several severe trials and testings, the development has been slow but steady. There has no doubt been failure at times to consolidate the gains made and to turn aggressive efforts into permanent results. It has been an official concern at times that the home base has failed in its development to keep pace with other spheres of the entire work. In recent years much emphasis has been placed upon the advancement of the home work to balance the entire program and to make possible an increasing forward move into the uttermost parts of the earth. In considering the progress made in the United States, attention will be given to the change in official personnel, the development of district organizations, and the establishment of local churches.

Denominational Officials

The original constitution of the Missionary Church Association provided for five officers, president, vice-president, secretary, assistant secretary, and treasurer. It also provided for one committee, a Missionary Committee of five members, under whose supervision all missionary work was to be carried on. In 1945, the office of Foreign Secretary was established so that full-time leadership might be given to this growing department of the work.

President. Rev. A. E. Funk was elected the first president of the Missionary Church Association and served for two years, 1898-1900. Rev. J. E. Ramseyer succeeded him in this office and gave leadership to the Association for forty-four years until his death in 1944. Rev. J. A. Ringenberg, the vice-president at the time of Mr. Ramseyer's death, succeeded him and has continued in this office to the present time.

Vice-President. Rev. J. E. Ramseyer was elected vice-president from 1898 to 1900. After he had succeeded Mr. Funk as president in 1900, Mr. Funk was elected vice-president and held this office for thirteen year from 1900 to 1913. Rev. C. W. Oyer became the first vice-president following Mr. Funk in 1913, and Mr. Funk was elected second vice-president for one year. The office of second vice- president was filled for one more year when Rev. H. C. Thiessen was elected to the office. Mr. Oyer continued as vice-president until 1925 when Rev. William Egle was elected. Rev. S. J. Grabill followed Mr. Egle and held the office for one year. Rev. J. A. Ringenberg was elected in 1931 and succeeeded Rev. J. E. Ramseyer as president upon his death in 1944. Rev. Walter H. Lugibihl became vice-president in that year and continues to hold the office.

Treasurer. Mr. David Schindler was elected the first treasurer of the Association and held this office from 1898 to 1909. He was greatly assisted by Henry Schindler, then in business in Berne, Indiana. In 1909 Mr. Noah Schumacher was elected to succeed him and continued in this responsible position until 1947. Upon the resignation of Mr. Schumacher during the year, Mr. S. S. Gerig was appointed to finish the unexpired term, and was reelected to the office in 1948. Mr. Schumacher's many years of service as treasurer deserves honorable mention in this record.

Secretary. Rev. William Egle was elected secretary at the first meeting of the founders of the Association. In the conference of 1908, Rev. D. Y. Schultz was elected to succeed him and served as secretary until 1911 when Rev. C. W. Oyer was elected. In the conference of 1915, Rev. H. C. Thiessen was elected to the office and was succeeded by Rev. B. F. Leightner in 1925. Mr. Leightner continued to hold this important position until his death.

Assistant Secretary. Those holding this position and the years of their terms of service are as follows: D. Y. Schultz, 1898-1908; C. W. Oyer, 1908-11; A. E. Witmer, 1911-1915; A. M. Clauser, 1915-1916; J. H. Allen, 1916-20; B. F. Leightner, 1920-1925; S. A. Witmer, 1925-1944; H. L. Mitchell, 1944—.

Foreign Secretary. The administration of the missionary program was handled largely by the Missionary Committee in the earlier years and later by the General Committee. In 1909, G. R. Schroeder was appointed to serve as foreign secretary and he was reelected in 1910. There is no further record of a foreign secretary after 1910 until 1922, when again a foreign secretary was appointed to handle the missionary correspondence to relieve the general secretary of the M.C.A. Rev. Ernest Kuhnle was the first to hold this office at that time. He was followed by Rev. P. L. Eicher from 1924 to 1929. In 1929, Rev. B. F. Leightner assumed the duties, carrying the responsibilities of both the foreign secretary and general secretary. The work consisted largely of correspondence with executive and administrative power residing in the General Committee. The enlargement of the missionary program in 1944 created the demand for a full-time foreign secretary. In that same year, Rev. David Siemens, former missionary for twelve years to Latin America

was appointed by the General Committee to this important office. Mr. Siemens has given aggressive leadership to the expanding missionary program. Through a constiutional revision by the Conference in 1945, the foreign secretary was made a general officer of the Association, and as such is elected by the Conference and serves as a member *ex officio* of the General Committee.

General Committee. The General Committee was known as the Missionary Committee, until the Annual Conference beginning on August 9, 1915. The name was changed at that time, due largely to the more general duties of the committee and the enlargement and revision of the Constitution in the conference of that year. The Missionary Committee was originally composed of five members. There was a gradual increasing of the membership of the Committee and later a number of advisory members were added. The General Committee serves in the capacity of foreign as well as home board and is reponsible to the General Conference. Its duties and functions are wide and varied as it gives supervision to the entire program both at home and in foreign lands. The present General Committee is composed of the officers, as follows: J. A. Ringenberg, Pres.; W. H. Lugibihl, Vice-Pres.; C. H. Eicher, Secretary; S. S. Gerig, Treasurer; H. L. Mitchell, Assistant Secretary; D. F. Siemens, Foreign Secretary; and five additional members, C. J. Gerig, Earl Leonard, Shirl Hatfield, Clayton D. Steiner, and William Whiteman. The personnel of the General Committee has changed with the passing of time and many faithful and devoted servants of God, who were members of it, have passed to their eternal rewards. To them we owe a debt which can only be paid in being faithful to the trust which they have passed on to their successors.

Growth of Districts

In an effort to consolidate the results of evangelistic meetings and to carry on a program of extension work, early in the history of the Association, *district evangelists* were appointed by the General Conference. It is evident that many of these evangelists served in states where no permanent churches were ever established. In the Conference of 1908, the name of District Evangelist was changed to District Superintendent. The District Superintendents were given the responsibility of one state or two states at the most in the early years. A combining of certain states was in evidence in the early twenties and the trend seemed to be in favor of less and larger districts. The first combination of states into Districts came in 1928-29, when the three geographical areas of the country came to be designated as the Western District, the Mid-Western District, and the Eastern District. The following year the Eastern District became more appropriately named the Central District. In the Conference of 1947, a recommendation was presented to divide the Central District by a diagonal line extending through the southwest corner of Pennsylvania and the northwest corner of Ohio, thus forming a new Eastern District. Though this recommendation was adopted, the new district was not completely organized until 1949 when Rev. Earl Leonard was appointed the District Superintendent, a committee was elected, and the district headquarters established at Swanton, Ohio.

For many years the Western District was left unorganized and under the supervision of the General Committee. In recent years under the aggressive leadership of D. F. Siemens (1940-1944) and Edison Habegger, the present District Superintendent, much growth and expansion has taken place. There is an attempt being

made to bridge the gaps existing betwen churches and districts and to bring into a closer fellowship the entire Association. For the first time in the history of the Association, the General Conference was held in 1949 in the Western District where it was entertained by the First Missionary Church of Van Nuys, California.

The Central District came into existence by Conference action in 1928 when the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania were combined into one district. S. J. Grabill, having served for one year over the state of Indiana was appointed the District Superintendent over the combined area. For twelve years he labored faithfully in giving leadership to the district, consolidating the states, as well as organizing many new churches. Upon his resignation in 1939, J. A. Ringenberg was elected to the district position, as well as holding the office of vice-president of the Association. Upon succeeding J. E. Ramseyer as president, Mr. Ringenberg was followed by C. J. Gerig in the district office in 1944. A district parsonage was purchased in 1940 at 3506 Indiana Avenue in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Central District is the largest district having the advantage of being nearest to the denominational headquarters.

The Mid-Western District was created by combining the states of Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Arkansas. Other states would no doubt be included, as churches were established in them. Less aggressive work has been done in this district due largely to the shortage of funds and men. Gerhard J. Kleiwer, Sr., John C. Birkey, E. F. Clauser, and William Egle, who served over two periods, did much constructive work in leading the district. After the death of Mr. Egle, the supervision of the district was carried on from the

Ministers, Missionaries, and Missionary Candidates, and their Wives at Central District Prayer Conference. Bluffton, Ohio, April 3-5, 1939.

Front row, left to right, Mrs. Ringenberg, J. A. Ringenberg. Jared F. Gerig, H. E. Wiswell, H. L. Mitchell, S. J. Grabill, District Superintendent, C. L. Grabill, C. R. Gerig, Armin Steiner, Mrs. Steiner.

Second row, Florence Cavender, Olen Schlatter, Mrs. Schlatter. Elizabeth Hilty, Mrs. S. J. Grabill, Minnie Hilty, Edith Beyerle, Mrs. Schindler, Waldo Schindler, Luella Burley.

Last two rows, Alfred Jacobs, William Brennen, Mrs. Agin, William Agin, C H. Wiederkehr, Mrs. Amstutz, Eldon Mitchell, Allen Amstutz. Robert Strubhar. Annabelle Burnison, Mrs. Strubhar, M. N. Amstutz. C. B. Vollmar, J. J. Klopfenstein, Mrs. M. N. Amstutz, Mrs. Paul Steiner, C. J. Gerig, W. H. Lugibihl, Paul Steiner, Tillman Habegger.

CENTRAL DISTRICT WORKERS CONFERENCE AT BERNE, INDIANA

March 30 to April 2, 1941

Front row, left to right. C. H. Eicher, J. A. Ringenberg, J. E. Ramseyer, Mrs. Ramseyer, Mrs. Rhoda Hinkey, Fannie Schindler, Elizabeth Hilty, Thomas Francis, C. H. Wiederkehr, host pastor.
Second row, Albert Hager, Max Heller, J. J. Klopfenstein, A. M. Clauser, C. B. Vollmar, C. J. Gerig, E. F. Clauser, John Oyer, James Lambert, L. J. Welch, W. H. Lugibihl, Armin Steiner, Don Kelly.
Third row, Tillman Habegger, C. R. Gerig, R. C. Reynolds, Paul Steiner, Walter Grossman, Harold Welty, Oscar Eicher, M. N. Amstutz, Eldon Mitchell.

Workers from Western District, April 1946, Van Nuys. California.

Front row, left to right, B. M. Oyer, Charles Imler, W.B. Uphold, Jr., A. R. Booher, Edison Habegger, Dist. Supt.
Second row, Ben Jennings, Marvin R. Parker, Charles McHatton, Lawrence Pine, Burley Clay, Noah J. Witmer, Herald Welty, Cornelius Vlot.

Workers in Midwestern District taken at Dodge City, Kans., Aug., 1947.

Front row, left to right, Verna Unruh, Bertha Ratzlaff, Mrs. Elmer Egle, Esther Steinman, Mrs. Isbel, Mrs. Ezra Zimmerman, Henry B Schmidt.

Second row, Mrs. Eagle, Elmer Egle. Mrs. Clarence R. Gerig, Mrs. Paul Wilbur, R. L. Isbel, Andrew Schmidt, Mrs. Andrew Schmidt, Mrs. Henry B. Schmidt, Walter Mease.

Back row, Vernon Eagle, Clarence R. Gerig, Dist. Supt., Mrs. Roy Whittum, Roy Whittum, Paul Wilbur, Floyd Parker, ———, John Ratzlaff.

HOME WORKERS IN THE OZARKS, August 1947

Left to right, Walter J. Mease, wife, daughter, Vernon Eagle, wife, son, R. L. Isbel, wife in front, Floyd Parker, Esther Steinman, in front, Clarence R. Gerig, Dist. Supt., Bertha Ratzlaff.

headquarters of the Association. In 1946, Clarence R. Gerig was appointed as District Superintendent and he was followed by Charles Imler in 1948. A district parsonage was purchased in Sterling, Kansas, where the headquarters of the district are located.

The pattern of the district work can be quite well formulated by the following outline of years, personnel, and areas:

1905-1909 (District Evangelists)
G. J. Kliewer—Oklahoma District
John S. Regier—Nebraska
S. D. Burkey—Illinois
M. E. Ramseyer—Wisconsin and Iowa
David Stucky—Michigan
C. W. Oyer—Ohio
William Egle—Indiana
M. S. Schrock—Tennessee

1909-1910 (District Superintendents)
William Egle—Nebraska District
G. J. Kliewer—Kansas and Oklahoma
M. S. Schrock—Tennessee
S. D. Burkey—Illinois and Missouri
M. E. Ramseyer—Wisconsin and Iowa
D. S. Stucky—Michigan
A. M. Clauser—Pennsylvania
A. E. Witmer—Ohio
Henry Roth—Indiana

1910-1911
William Egle—Nebraska District
G. J. Kliewer—Kansas and Oklahoma
M. S. Schrock—Tennessee
S. D. Burkey—Illinois and Missouri
M. E. Ramseyer—Wisconsin and Iowa
C. W. Oyer—Michigan

A. M. Clauser—Pennsylvania
A. E. Witmer—Ohio
Henry Roth—Indiana

1911-1912
Same as previous year

1912-1913
Wm. Egle—Nebraska
G. J. Kliewer—Kansas
M. S. Schrock—Tennessee
H. C. Thiessen—Ohio
M. E. Ramseyer—Wisconsin & Iowa
C. W. Oyer—Michigan
A. M. Clauser—Pennsylvania
Henry Roth—Indiana
S. D. Burkey—Illinois and Missouri

1913-1914
Wm. Egle—Nebraska
G. J. Kliewer—Kansas and Oklahoma
H. C. Thiessen—Ohio
M. E. Ramseyer—Wisconsin and Iowa
C. W. Oyer—Michigan
A. M. Clauser—Pennsylvania
Henry Roth—Indiana
S. D. Burkey—Illinois and Missouri

1914-1915
Same as previous year

1915-1916
Same as previous year

1916-1917
S. S. Gerig—Ohio
G. R. Schroeder—Michigan
Henry Roth—Indiana
Wm. Egle—Nebraska
G. J. Kliewer—Kansas

M. S. Schrock—Tennessee
M. E. Ramseyer—Wisconsin and Iowa
A. M. Clauser—Pennsylvania
S. D. Burkey—Illinois and Missouri

1917-1918

G. J. Kliewer—Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma
M. S. Schrock—Tennessee
S. S. Gerig—Ohio
M. E. Ramseyer—Wisconsin and Iowa
G. R. Schroeder—Michigan
A. M. Clauser—Pennsylvania

1918-1919

G. J. Kliewer—Kansas and Oklahoma
Wm. Egle—Nebraska
M. S. Schrock—Tennessee
S. S. Gerig—Ohio
M. E. Ramseyer—Wisconsin and Iowa
G. R. Schroeder—Michigan
A. M. Clauser—Pennsylvania
Henry Roth—Indiana
S. D. Burkey—Illinois and Missouri

1919-1920

G. J. Kliewer—Kansas, Oklahoma and Nebraska
J. E. Lauby (Assistant Dist. Supt.)
E. Kuhnle—Ohio
J. J. Fliginger—Illinois and Missouri
S. D. Burkey—California and Arizona
Note: This is all that were listed for that year. Perhaps the others remained the same.

1920-1921

S. D. Burkey—Arizona and California
J. J. Fliginger—Illinois and Missouri
Henry Roth—Indiana
G. J. Kliewer—Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma
Wm. Egle (Assistant Dist. Supt.)

G. R. Schroeder—Michigan
E. Kuhnle—Ohio
A. M. Clauser—Pennsylvania
M. S. Schrock—Tennessee
M. E. Ramseyer—Wisconsin & Iowa

1921-1922

S. D. Burkey—Arizona & California
J. J. Flinginger—Illinois & Missouri
Henry Roth—Indiana
G. J. Kliewer—Kansas, Nebraska & Oklahoma
E. Kuhnle—Ohio
A. M. Clauser—Pennsylvania
No election for Tennessee
M. E. Ramseyer—Wisconsin & Iowa

1922-1923

S. D. Burkey—Arizona & California
J. J. Flinginger—Illinois & Missouri
H. Roth—Indiana
G. J. Kliewer—Kansas, Nebraska & Oklahoma
E. Kuhnle—Ohio & Michigan
A. M. Clauser—Pennsylvania
No election for Tennessee
M. E. Ramseyer—Wisconsin & Iowa

1923-1924

No record of an election. Evidently the same men held office as the previous year.

1924-1925

G. J. Kliewer—Kansas, Nebraska & Oklahoma
E. F. Clauser—Pennsylvania
John E. Lauby—Arizona and California
M. N. Amstutz—Illinois and Missouri
Wm. Egle—Indiana
E. Kuhnle—Ohio and Michigan
P. L. Eicher—Wisconsin and Iowa

1925-1926
J. E. Lauby—Arizona and California
E. F. Clauser—Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma
S. J. Grabill—Illinois and Missouri
Sol Klopfenstein—Indiana
D. C. Rupp—Ohio and Michigan
No elections for Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and the Wisconsin, Iowa Districts.

1926-1927
G. J. Kliewer—California
E. F. Clauser—Kansas, Nebraska & Oklahoma
W. H. Lugibihl—Illinois
A. M. Clauser—Indiana
D. C. Rupp—Ohio and Michigan
A. L. Weikel—Pennsylvania

1927-1928
S. D. Burkey—California and Arizona
E. F. Clauser—Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma
Chris Eicher—Illinois and Missouri
S. J. Grabill—Indiana
Ezra Roth—Ohio and Michigan
A. L. Weikel—Pennsylvania

1928-1929
Joseph Greider—Western District
G. J. Kliewer—Mid-Western District
S. J. Grabill—Eastern District (now the Central District)

1929-1930
S. D. Burkey—Western
J. C. Birkey—Midwestern
S. J. Grabill—Central

1930-1931
J. C. Birkey—Midwestern
S. J. Grabill—Central

Western District—Under jurisdiction of General Committee for one year.

1931-1932
S. J. Grabill—Central
J. C. Birkey—Midwestern

1932-1933
Same as previous year

1933-1934
S. J. Grabill—Central
Midwestern—Motion passed not to have one that year.

1934-1935
S. J. Grabill—Central
J. C. Birkey—Midwestern

1935-1939
S. J. Grabill—Central
Wm. Egle—Midwestern

1939-1940
J. A. Ringenberg—Central
Wm. Egle—Midwestern

1940-1941
J. A. Ringenberg—Central
Wm. Egle—Midwestern
D. F. Siemens—Western

1941-1944
D. F. Siemens—Western
J. A. Ringenberg—Central
Wm. Egle—Midwestern

1944-1945
C. J. Gerig—Central
Edison Habegger—Western
D. F. Siemens—(Part-time superintendent of the

Midwestern District along with serving as Foreign Secretary.)

1945-1946
Edison Habegger—Western
C. J. Gerig—Central

1946-1947
Edison Habegger—Western
Clarence Gerig—Midwestern
C. J. Gerig—Central

1947-1948
Same as previous year

1948-1949
Same as previous year

1949-1950
Edison Habegger—Western
Charles Imler—Midwestern
C. J. Gerig—Central
Earl Leonard—Eastern

ORGANIZATION OF CHURCHES

Upon the organization of the Missionary Church Association in August, 1898, various groups of Christians were seeking fellowship and a common place of worship. Some of these groups were made up of those who had withdrawn from the older Mennonite church. They met often in school houses or rented buildings. These early congregations of Christians became the nuclei for the founding and organizing of the first Missionary churches.

Other churches came into existence through evangelistic and revival efforts. The tent meeting was quite common and many times churches would spring up as a result of God's blessing upon tent meetings held in

small and neglected areas. Much revival work was conducted in which the results were plenteous, but the building of the converts into a congregational unit was neglected. Much attention was given to foreign missions and this may account in measure for the failure to take advantage of the gains made in establishing a strong home base. The present inadequacy of the home base is being keenly felt and a more aggressive extension program is being launched for the founding and building of churches in the United States.

At the present time, there are seventy one organized churches and twelve unorganized in the Missionary Church Association. These are distributed according to districts in the following manner: Sixteen in the Western District, ten in the Mid-Western District, twenty-eight in the Central District, and twenty-six in the Eastern District. One organized church is located in Koloa, Hawaii and one unorganized in Kalaheo. These churches are located in ten states: three in Arizona, three in Arkansas, twelve in California, five in Illinois, sixteen in Indiana, five in Kansas, fourteen in Michigan, one in Missouri, one in Nebraska, eighteen in Ohio, one in Oregon, one in Tennessee and three in Pennsylvania. The 1949 Conference Report gives the total membership of the organized churches as 5,513. The total Sunday School enrollment for the same churches was 9,955.

CHAPTER VIII

The Foreign Missions Policy and Program

From the very beginning, foreign missions has been a primary goal in all of the ministry of the Missionary Church Association. The name itself gave definite emphasis to the central interest and first love of the men who founded it. Contacts and associations with the Christian and Missionary Alliance in the earlier years helped many to catch the impulse and inspiration of the world-wide enterprise of missions. The Great Commission was made the battle-cry and every effort was made to spread the Gospel into all the world. It has already been cited that lack of development on the home front can be attributed to the vision and effort to reach the lost in the uttermost parts of the earth. It is evident now that much ground was lost at home where a spiritual beachhead was already established, due largely to failure to follow through in the organization of churches.

The Policy

The missionary policy of the Missionary Church Association from the beginning was a cooperative one embracing the selection and support of missionaries who were sent out to the field under the supervision of, and in fellowship with, such orthodox and sound missionary agencies as were already established on the field. It was felt unwise and unnecessary to duplicate administration, build mission stations, and acquire mission property. This policy was followed until 1945.

During these years missionaries were sent out and supported in ten foreign lands directly under the supervision of the Christian and Missionary Alliance with whom the Missionary Church Association has enjoyed the closest and richest fellowship. Missionaries in keeping with this policy have also labored in eleven other foreign fields under various agencies and boards. Besides the Christian and Missionary Alliance, other cooperating societies have included the United Missionary Society, the South African General Mission, the Congo Inland Mission, the Oriental Missionary Society, Mid-Missions, Inland South American Missionary Union, Kakaaka Mission, South Chihli Mission, Ebenezer Mission, Pilgrim Holiness Church, China Mennonite Missionary Society, Ramabai Mukti Mission, Sudan Interior Mission, Zambesi Mission, Hunan Bible Institute, HCJB in Ecuador, and the Peruvian Bible Institute. Rich rewards in spiritual blessing and fellowship have come through such a wide cooperation with others in the world-wide missionary cause. It has illustrated in a small measure the church of Jesus Christ united in the great work left for it to accomplish on earth.

Several factors entered into the first efforts by the Association in 1945 to establish and supervise its own fields in foreign lands. The need for increasing missionary stimulus and interest, the increasing difficulty in getting candidates to the field through other societies with long lists of priority candidates, and the closing of many fields due to world-wide war conditions, stimulated a revived interest in the opening of fields directly under the administration of the Missionary Church Association. The limitations brought about by war directly influenced the making of a survey of the Dominican Republic in the fall of 1944 by Rev. D. F.

Siemens and Rev. C. E. Rediger, representatives of the Missionary Church Association and the Evangelical Mennonites repectively. It was hoped that such a field might be entered and evangelized when travel to more distant lands was impossible. In keeping with a favorable report, the Missionary Church Association opened a field on the Dominican-Haitian frontier in the Dominican Republic in 1945. In the same year responsibility was assumed for the district of Esmeraldas in Ecuador, South America, and for the reopening of the Sierra Leone field in West Africa. In 1946, after a survey by D. F. Siemens in the Hawaiian Islands, a more intensive effort was begun to establish a permanent and progressive evangelistic work in the Islands. The Islands were to be considered a stepping stone for missionary expansion toward the Orient. The Koloa Hawaiian Missionary Church became a member church of the Missionary Church Association and the center for missionary activity in the Island of Kauai and elsewhere in the Islands. In 1949, the supervision of a district in Jamaica was taken over by the Missionary Church. In this area there are five organized churches and nine out-stations, and administrative personnel is already on the field. It has been evident that the assuming and bearing of full responsibility for these works in other lands has been a stimulus to revived missionary interest both in sacrificial giving and in the increased number of candidates volunteering. The first five years under the policy of full responsibility and control have demonstrated its worth and wisdom both at home and abroad.

THE PRESENT PROGRAM

There is at the present time a foreign missionary corps of seventy-six missionaries. Fifty-six missionaries are being supported directly by the Missionary Church

Association, fourteen are supported by funds from outside sources, and six missionaries are on retiral. These missionaries are serving in the following fields: thirty-two in various fields in Africa with eighteen located in the M. C. A. field of Sierra Leone; one in China with the Hunan Bible Institute; eight in the Dominican-Haitian frontier field in the Dominican Republic; two in Jamaica; seven in the Hawaiian Islands; six in India; one in Mexico; fourteen in South America, nine of whom are in the M. C. A. field of Esmeraldas, Ecuador. Forty-four missionaries have gone into M.C.A. mission fields within the last five years and are directly under the administration of the Missionary Church Association.

PIONEERS

While it is impossible to give more than passing recognition to the many missionaries who have labored in foreign lands in the last fifty years, there are those who became pioneers and trailblazers and whose lives challenged many others to take up their cross to go into lands across the seas. These we must mention and honor in this record.

Miss Eliza Von Gunten of Bluffton, Ohio, was one of a small party who pioneered their way into Central China in 1891. She was converted in services conducted in Bethany Home in Bluffton, Ohio, and later attended the Missionary Training Institute, then located in New York City. Her friends at home had obligated themselves for her support, and in 1898 when the Missionary Church Association was founded, her support was channeled through the treasurer of that organization. This was continued through many years of faithful service and several years of retirement until her death in 1940. She was the first foreign representative of the Missionary Church Association.

Mr. Ernest Biber, of Berne, Indiana, was associated with Light and Hope Publishing Company in Christian work and also travel-companion of Rev. J. E. Ramseyer in his earlier evangelistic labors. He went to Congo under the Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1892 and was supported by many friends who later became associated with the Missionary Church. His consecration to Africa was best stated in his own testimony, "Africa is my home; to Africa I must go, if only to be buried there." He served in Africa only four short months and was buried there after succumbing to the dreaded black water fever.

Henry Zehr of Geneva, Indiana, who succeeded Ernest Biber as the associate of J. E. Ramseyer, attended the Bethany Home Bible Institute for the first two years and then spent one year in the Missionary Training Institute at Nyack, New York. He sailed for South China in December, 1902, where he labored under the tireless and enthusiastic missionary leader, Isaac Hess. After a little more than two years of valiant service in famine relief, Mr. Zehr was stricken with smallpox and fell asleep in Christ on April 10, 1904 at the age of two days less than twenty-seven years. One of Mr. Zehr's early sermons on "The Christian Soldier" was published in the first issue of *The Missionary Worker* and later was given wide circulation in tract form. Many young men were influenced by this message and dedicated themselves to the unfinished task left by Mr. Zehr. He was a member of the West Berne Missionary Church, Berne, Indiana, and as such, the first missionary to go to the field as a member of the newly organized Missionary Church Association.

In 1903, *Misses Katherine and Lydia Burkey* of Milford, Nebraska, responded to the call for foreign service in North China. In less than a year they both

contracted smallpox and died a few days apart.

C. L. Eicher, a student at the Bethany Home Bible Institute, and later at Nyack, New York, after a short successful pastorate at Altoona, Pennsylvania, sailed with Mrs. Eicher and their daughter Anna to India in December, 1903. After a second term of blessed labors in India, they were detained in the United States where Mr. Eicher served as Dean of the Missionary Training Institute in Nyack, New York for six years. In later years he founded the World-wide Prayer and Missionary Union with headquarters in Chicago, Illinois. Through this organization, Mr. Eicher gave outstanding missionary leadership in the cause of missions. He was highly respected for his missionary statesmanship, passion, and vision. The missionary burden of the Eichers was transmitted to their children, two sons, Elmore and Albert, serving as missionaries in India, and a daughter, Ruby, in Colombia, South America. Mr. Eicher passed to his eternal reward in December, 1946.

Miss Rhoda Lugibihl, of Bluffton, Ohio, was the next recruit for foreign service, leaving for South China in September, 1904. She was united in marriage to Mr. Philip Hinkey and they labored together in China until 1936, when due to the impaired health of Mr. Hinkey, they returned to the United States. Mr. Hinkey had gone to the field with Dr. Robert Jaffray and Dr. Robert Glover in 1897 and spent thirty-nine years in outstanding missionary labors. He went to be with the Lord in April, 1940.

Miss Elizabeth Hilty of Pandora, Ohio, sailed for Central China in December, 1905, where she joined Miss Eliza Von Gunten in the work. When she returned for her second term in China, she was accompanied by her sister, *Miss Minnie Hilty,* and together they literally "manned the station." They bought mis-

sion property, supervised the construction of buildings, and administered the work of the station as well as a large surrounding district. Elizabeth was recently called the "Mary Slessor of China" by a prominent missionary leader. She very reluctantly remained in the homeland in 1938, after spending four terms on the field. Her sister, Minnie, returned to China for one more term and retired from active service in 1946. Both sisters are living in their home town of Pandora, Ohio.

Solomon Miller of Sterling, Kansas, went to South China in 1905, and labored there for a short term of four years, returning to the homeland in 1907.

Rev. and Mrs. P. L. Eicher, accompanied by *Miss Barbara Eicher* (later Mrs. Bert Cox), sailed for India in the fall of 1906. Previous to their ministry in India, the Eichers had attended the Bible Institute in Bluffton, Ohio and also in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and had traveled extensively in evangelistic labors with Rev. and Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer. They spent two terms in India, and were detained in the homeland in 1923 due to the ill health of Mrs. Eicher. Mrs. Barbara Eicher Cox labored in India until her return in 1943. After retirement, she went to the Hawaiian Islands in 1947 and is continuing a fruitful labor there at the present time.

David C. Rupp, who in his youth had found the Lord in meetings near Archbold, Ohio, was called of the Lord to foreign missionary service. After preparation, he sailed for Africa on October 15, 1907, going to what was then called the "white man's graveyard," Sierra Leone. He was supported by his home church, the Archbold Missionary Church. On the field he was married to Miss Grace Kennedy and together they have given over forty years of heroic service for Christ in Africa. In 1945, when they might have considered

retirement, they returned to Sierra Leone to reopen that field under the supervision of the Missionary Church Association. Their two sons, Kenneth and David Jr., with their families have joined them in the great work of this field. David Rupp, Sr. has been the field chairman since 1945 and has given outstanding leadership in the establishment of the work since the reopening of the field. Faithfulness, enthusiasm, and fervor have characterized both Mr. and Mrs. Rupp in their many years of service on foreign soil.

George Sharp, of Groveland, Illinois, went to the Sudan in 1909, where he spent one term of service.

Miss Nellie Bowen of Union City, Tennessee, was saved in her girlhood days and felt the call of the Lord to missionary service. She had hoped to go to Korea, but since no door was open to that land, she became willing to go "next door" to China. She graduated from the Fort Wayne Bible Training School in 1909 and went to China in 1910. Her face and life were radiant with the love of Christ and she was a much beloved missionary. After a little more than four years of service in central China, she became seriously ill with pneumonia, followed by smallpox, which resulted in her death on the field on February 25, 1914.

Rilla Klopfenstein of Grabill, Indiana, graduated from the Fort Wayne Bible Training School, and after home missionary work in Peoria, Illinois, sailed for Sierre Leone in Africa in 1912. She labored faithfully until that field was closed in 1921. Some of the missionary personnel was transferred to French West Africa, but she was detained at home and reentered city mission work. She was later married to Rev. Menno Amstutz, pastor at that time of the Mount Olive Missionary Church in Peoria, Illinois.

Walter S. Herr, also a graduate of the Fort Wayne Bible Training School in the class of 1909, entered missionary work in the Congo in 1911. He served for four years, and did not return to the field.

Miss Affie Smootz of Lima, Ohio, also entered the Congo in 1911, two years after her graduation from the Bible Training School in Fort Wayne. She has had the distinction of calling herself the "children's missionary" having been supported for years by funds collected through the Sunshine Makers' missionary acorn jugs. Miss Smootz has served for many years as an instructor in a native Bible Training School and has been used of the Lord in the training of many native pastors and evangelists. At the end of her last term, she completed thirty-four years of service, and in October of 1947, she returned to the land of her adoption for further missionary labors.

Miss Agnes Sprunger, also of the graduating class of 1909, went to the Congo on March 8, 1916. She gave much time to the translation of both the Old and the New Testaments so that almost the entire Bible has been made available to the tribe with which she has labored. She declined her last furlough and went into the hills for a brief rest in order that she might complete the task of translation. She has given thirty-four years of valiant service in the furtherance of the Gospel.

Miss Mary DeGarmo, also of that great missionary class of 1909, went to China on December 3, 1919, and labored until her death with only two furloughs in twenty-eight years. During the war years, different armies passed through their district, robbing and plundering so that she and her fellow missionaries were stripped again and again of all earthly possessions. She chose to remain at her post of duty through the

most severe and trying times, and on December 22, 1947, after an attack on the city had subsided, a hand grenade was thrown through the window of her humble cottage. She was critically wounded by the explosion and as a martyr in the great cause of world-wide evangelism, she entered the presence of her Lord to receive a just reward for such noble service and sacrifice.

A host of missionaries came marching in the train of these noble pioneers, but it was left to these to stamp upon the movement its character of service and sacrifice. They labored, some through many years, others through few years, but all to give themselves in unselfish devotion. Some like the corn of wheat fell into the ground to literally die, and from their self-giving and sacrifice has come the harvest a hundred-fold.

PERSONNEL

The following list of missionary personnel outlined by countries may not always be complete, but it is compiled from a consideration of all the information available. The dates given cover the complete cycle of their missionary service including furloughs. If the final dates mark the end of their service as well as their death, such fact is stated. If the missionary is still living and on retiral, this information is also given. At times, no information is available and therefore only the name of the missionary is given. If the final date of service is not marked by death or retiral, it means that the person involved has taken up work or is otherwise occupied in the homeland. Where no final date is given, the missionary is still actively engaged in missionary work We feel that this list constitutes an honor roll of both the living and the dead who have had a share in carrying out the great commission of our Lord.

Angola, Africa:
Miss Hannah Bracy, 1922-

Brazil:
Edison Steiner, 1922-Nov. 1922 (died on the field)

China:
Eliza Von Gunten, 1892-1929
Henry Zehr, 1902-1904 (died on the field)
Kathryn Burkey, 1903-1904 (died on the field)
Lydia Burkey, 1903-1904 (died on the field)
Solomon Miller, 1903-1907
Rhoda Lugibihl (Hinkey), 1904-1937 (on retiral)
Elizabeth Hilty, 1905-1938 (on retiral)
Nellie Bowen, 1910-1914 (died on the field)
Lena Gerber, 1911-1948 (on retiral)
Minnie Hilty, 1913-1946 (on retiral)
Henry Maier, 1913-1935
Mrs. Henry Maier, 1913-1935
John C. Birkey, first term 1913-1921; second term 1923-1927
Mrs. John C. Birkey, 1913-1921; second term 1923-1927. Died May 1940
Charles A. Roberts, 1916-
Mrs. Charles A. Roberts (Florence Suter) 1916-1919 (died on the field)
Mary DeGarmo, 1919-1947 (killed on the field.)
Fannie Baumgartner (Chapman), 1919-1949 (on retiral)
Ezra G. Roth, 1920-1928
Mrs. Ezra G. Roth, 1920-1928
Roy J. Birkey, 1933-1948 (with parents 1913-1927)
Mrs. Roy J. Birkey, 1933-1940

Colombia:
Elsie Rupp (Bauman) 1931-
Irma Judd (Langeloh) 1942-

Florence Cavender, 1944-
Clyde W. Taylor, -1932

Congo:

Ernest Biber, 1898-1898 (died on field)
Walter Herr, 1912-1917
Affie Smootz, 1912-
Agnes Sprunger, 1916-
Omar Sutton, 1919-1922
Wilma Rupp (Welch), 1920-1922
Emma Richert, 1922-1924
Fannie Schindler, 1924-
Clarence Birkey, 1925-
Archie Haller, 1926-1938 (Affiliation terminated in 1938. Died on the field 1942)
Mrs. Archie Haller, 1926-1938 (Affiliation terminated in 1938)
Grace Schram (Haller), 1926-1932
Herbert Haller, 1928-1932

Dominican Republic:

J. C. Neuenschwander, 1945-
Mrs. J. C. Neuenschwander, 1945-
Daniel F. Dyck, 1945-
Mrs. Daniel F. Dyck, 1945-
R. O. Elliott, 1945-
Mrs. R. O. Elliott, 1945-
David B. Clark, 1945-1948 (Now serving in Jamaica)
Mrs. David B. Clark, 1945-1948 (Now serving in Jamaica)
Theda June Davis, 1945-
Velma Goff, 1948-

Jamaica:

David B. Clark, 1943-1945, 1949-
Mrs. David B. Clark, 1943-1945, 1949-

Ecuador:
Ruth Christensen, 1941-1943 (Affiliation terminated in '43)
Charles Glenn, 1945-
Mrs. Chas. Glenn (L. Terrell), 1945- (Joined M.C.A. in 1947.)
T. Wayne Judd, 1945-1947
Dale Moser, 1945-
Mrs. Dale Moser, 1945-
Leona Lehner, 1945-
Mildred Wanner, 1948-
Truman Gottschalk, 1949-
Mrs. Truman Gottschalk, 1949-
Silvan J. Hausser, 1946-
Mrs. Silvan J. Hausser, 1946 (Served in Venezuela before going to Ecuador)
David F. Siemens, 1929-1940
Mrs. David F. Siemens, 1929-1940

French West Africa:
Clara Klint (Joder), 1924-
Edna Pape, 1939-1946
Kenneth P. Rupp, 1939-1945
David Rupp, Jr., 1939-1945
David C. Rupp, Sr., 1927-1943
Mrs. David C. Rupp, Sr., 1927-1943
Prudence Gerber, 1940-
Catherine Gratz, 1940-

Gabon:
Waldo Schindler, 1940-
Mrs. Waldo Schindler, 1940-
Floyd A. Shank, 1946-
Mrs. Floyd A. Shank, 1946-

Hawaiian Islands:
W. H. Castersen, 1924-
Mrs. W. H. Castersen, 1924-

W. D. Oyer, 1925-
W. H. Cox, 1946-1948
Mrs. W. H. Cox, 1946-1948
Dorothy Rothfuss, 1946-
Maxine Ensley, 1947-1949
Don Rohrs, 1948-
Mrs. Don Rohrs, 1948-
Mrs. Barbara Cox, 1947-1950

India:

C. L. Eicher, 1903-1920
Mrs. C. L. Eicher, 1903-1920
P. L. Eicher, 1906-1923
Mrs. P. L. Eicher, 1906-1923
Barbara Eicher (Cox), 1906-1943 (went on retiral, 1948)
Oswald Dinham, 1917-1919 (died on the field 1919)
Tilman Amstutz, 1919-
J. S. Ringenberg, 1922-
Olen G. Schlatter, 1923-1942 (died on the field)
Bert Siegel, 1923-1932
Nancy Ramseyer, 1923-1924 (died on the field)
Ruth Taylor (Schlatter), 1924-
Esther Roth (Siegel), 1925-1932 (killed in an auto accident, 1939)
Elda Amstutz, 1927-
Ruth Eicher, 1928-1935
Luella Burley, 1939-

Kenya Colony:

Helen Goosen, 1914-

Mexico:

Mahala Diller,1943-

Nigeria:

Luella Landrey, 1941

Nyasaland:

Elizabeth Tiefenthaler (Alofs), 1943-1949

Paraguay:

James H. Allen, 1920-1924 (resigned from M.C.A.)
Mrs. James H. Allen, 1920-1924 (resigned from M.C. A.)
David F. Siemens, 1922-1925 (In Ecuador 1929-1940)
Mrs. David F. Siemens, 1922-1925 (In Ecuador 1929-1940)

Peru:

Clyde W. Taylor, 1924-
Marian Nofsinger (Clark), 1926-
Clayton D. Steiner, 1928-1944
Mrs. Clayton D. Steiner, 1928-1944

Sierra Leone:

David C. Rupp, Sr., 1907-1925, 1943- (Also served in French West Africa)
Mrs. D. C. Rupp, Sr., (Grace Kennedy), 1908-1925, 1943- (Also served in French West Africa)
Rilla Klopfenstein (Amstutz), 1912-1921
Don M. Kelly, 1945-
Mrs. Don M. Kelly, 1945-
Marie Stauffer (Rupp), 1945-
Mrs. Kenneth P. Rupp, 1946-
Jake P. Schierling, 1947-
Mrs. Jake P. Schierling, 1947-
Joseph Shisler, 1948-
Mrs. Joseph Shisler, 1948-
Miss Hazel Shoup, 1948-
Miss Ruth Zollner, 1948-
Miss Helen Burley, 1948-
Dr. Hugh L. Maclure, 1949 (Joined M.C.A. in 1949)
Mrs. Hugh L. Maclure, 1949 (Joined M.C.A. in 1949)
Miss Edna Pape, 1947-

Sudan:

George Sharp, 1909-1913

Venezuela:

Silvan J. Hausser, 1929-1945 (Now in Ecuador under M.C.A.)

Mrs. Silvan J. Hausser, 1929-1945 (Now in Ecuador under M.C.A.)

CHAPTER IX

The Departmental Work[1]

Many great works in the kingdom of God have been accomplished through the energy and vision of a woman. It is true, too, that it is often through little beginnings that great accomplishments are wrought to the glory of God. So it was that a woman bearing a burden for a few children and proceeding to do something about it began a chain of events which have built spiritual history across the past forty-eight years.

The Sunshine Makers

Mrs. Macy Garth Ramseyer, the wife of Rev. J. E. Ramseyer, beloved president of the Missionary Church Association, attended her first missionary convention in Pandora, Ohio in 1902. The absence of the children from the services of the convention stirred her heart and provoked her to action. The question, "Where are the children?" soon was answered as she found them in a ball-game on the play-ground, or caring for other smaller children. It burdened her heart heavily as she contemplated the convention's lost influence upon the children. "They, too, must have a part in the spreading of the Gospel. The spirit of missions must be planted in their hearts. As they grow up they must be prepared to go, to give, and to pray. The children must not miss the inspiration and impressions of these great missionary conventions." Such was the determi-

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[1]The authors are indebted to Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer and her booklet, "Story of the Sunshine Makers and Gleaners" for much of the material used in this chapter.

nation of Mrs. Ramseyer as she set out to do something about the situation.

In aggressive and fearless fashion, she set out to find the chairman of the program committee. A place must be made on the daily schedule for a children's service. The chairman had the usual answer, "The day is full from the six o'clock sunrise prayer meeting to the ten o'clock altar service in the evening." He did confess, however, that it seemed too bad not to have some place for the little ones. "What about the hour just after dinner?" was Mrs. Ramseyer's happy suggestion. As a result the half-hour from 1:00 to 1:30 o'clock was accepted with a grateful heart and by the children's grape-vine the news spread throughout the convention grounds. The children were first at the dinner tables that day in order to make the 1:00 o'clock children's meeting. From this first meeting of the children has grown the Sunshine Makers' movement of the Missionary Church Association, a remarkable children's effort in behalf of the foreign missionary enterprise. Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer's vision and burden which issued in active leadership for forty-four years has resulted in a hundredfold of fruitage both in gifts and lives.

From that first meeting in 1902 to the present time the children have been having their place and part in annual convention programs whether in the local church or in the districts. It was in 1903 at the next annual convention that the missionary aspect of the children's program was begun. A well-defined objective for this work was chosen and emphasized, "The promotion of the spirit of missions in the hearts of the children." The offerings which were brought in each year by the children were designated as "Sunshine Money for Shady Places."

It was in the convention of 1903 held at Groveland, Illinois that little banks made in the shape of a small jug were distributed to fifty children. Gotten from these first banks, the name "Missionary Jugs" has persisted through many years although the shape of the bank has changed several times, and is at the present in the form of an acorn. Mrs. Ramseyer wrote the first pledge for the children in the convention of 1903. She tells the story graphically, "We felt we should write, 'thirty dollars' as our pledge, but do you know we just could not, for the suggestion from the enemy that if the children did not make up that amount in those missionary jugs we would have to do it. Thirty dollars looked big to us, so we put the pledge card in our bag and waited to get quiet." The inspiration of the children's meeting that afternoon was a tonic to Mrs. Ramseyer's faith and when she went from the meeting to the big tent that afternoon she doubled the amount and wrote the pledge for sixty dollars.

It was in the convention of 1904 convening at Swanton, Ohio, that the first returns from this embryonic movement were brought in by the children. During the previous year twenty-five more jugs had been sent out in answer to requests by mail. Seventy-five jugs were therefore due to be returned with the children's savings for missions securely inclosed within. Since there was no other way to get the money but to break the jugs, a memorable first "jug-breaking" service was held in Brindley's Grove under the big tent in August, 1904. The children marching like soldiers on parade came to the platform and taking the hammer proceeded to break the jugs. Out from the jugs flowed and sometimes flew pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters. When that first offering was counted it totaled one hundred and twenty-two dollars and fifty-two cents.

In the convention of 1905 in Pandora, Ohio, nearly three hundred jugs were broken by the children with an offering amounting to three hundred and forty-eight dollars and thirty-seven cents. It was at this convention that the name "Sunshine Makers" was chosen for the children. Since those early years the number of Sunshine Makers has increased yearly, the offerings have mounted higher and higher, and the "jug-breaking services" have become a unique annual feature in all local Missionary Churches. The idea has been adopted in churches of other denominations and in churches in foreign lands.

The Sunshine Maker money has been distinctly missionary money. It has gone into practically all missionary fields of the world through various channels to aid in the great task of world-wide evangelization. The full support of two missionaries, Miss Affie Smoots in Africa and Miss Mary DeGarmo in China, has been supplied from these funds until recently the support of children of our missionaries became the objective. Much of the money has gone directly and fittingly enough into the evangelization of heathen children who in time have become native teachers and evangelists in their own lands. Many other projects in keeping with the spreading of sunshine have been made possible in other lands through the children's "sunshine money for shady places."

The following record of offerings made through the medium of the "missionary jugs" bespeak a task well done and a vision gloriously realized. Who can estimate the far-reaching results achieved through the children's offerings through the years?

1904	$ 122.52	1928	3,426.95
1905	348.37	1929	2,133.01
1906	564.83	1930	2,881.09
1907	869.02	1931	2,474.01
1908	964.91	1932	1,840.23
1909	1,000.91	1933	1,314.81
1910	1,065.76	1934	1,630.12
1911	1,050.70	1935	1,620.77
1912	1,379.69	1936	1,788.93
1913	1,402.72	1937	2,168.67
1914	1,446.21	1938	2,152.91
1915	1,626.85	1939	2,379.68
1916	1,636.89	1940	2,638.89
1917	2,051.37	1941	2,250.36
1918	2,343.47	1942	3,639.65
1919	2,449.92	1943	5,141.63
1920	3,209.62	1944	7,194.48
1921	2,573.47	1945	8,738.90
1922	2,217.43	1946	7,346.12
1923	2,033.84	1947	7,573.33
1924	2,350.12	1948	10,453.98
1925	2,411.94	1949	9,164.15
1926	2,730.26		
1927	2,696.95	Total	$130,500.45

THE GLEANERS

It was not many years after the founding of the Sunshine Makers that Mrs. Ramseyer came forcibly to realize that "children do not stay little." There must also be an organization for the promotion of missions among the children in their teens. As they grow older they must not be allowed to lose their earlier missionary interest and enthusiasm. In 1915, in keeping with this determination, a movement among the young people was begun and called the Gleaners. The Gleaners were started in two local churches, the Missionary

Churches in Berne, Indiana, and in Pandora, Ohio. From these churches the movement, name, and purpose has spread to most of the local Missionary Churches.

The objective of the Gleaners has been to support the children of missionaries. They have gathered their money in $5.00 dime banks and have made a sizable contribution to the missionary enterprise through the years. While the Gleaner idea did not catch fire as readily nor as quickly as that of the Sunshine Makers, it no doubt left its impression for good on the lives of many young people who later answered the call for full-time service both at home and in foreign lands. The Gleaner offerings from 1915 to 1949 are as follows:

1915	$ 187.50	1933	425.48
1916	394.01	1934	681.17
1917	410.03	1935	752.15
1918	550.85	1936	615.32
1919	1,055.92	1937	785.30
1920	1,589.91	1938	862.44
1921	120.28	1939	703.23
1922	969.73	1940	789.03
1923	1,153.48	1941	665.67
1924	1,012.80	1942	844.77
1925	1,396.52	1943	1,745.64
1926	1,764.98	1944	1,091.83
1927	1,298.66	1945	1,556.82
1928	2,095.69	1946	1,617.93
1929	1,278.00	1947	1,873.24
1930	1,649.69	1948	2,495.50
1931	1,910.58	1949	2,477.51
1932	1,695.19		
		Total	$40,516.94

Total Sunshine Makers' Offerings $130,500.45

Total Gleaners' Offerings	40,516.94
Grand Total	$171,017.39

Until 1946, Mrs. Ramseyer gave active leadership to the children's work in the Missionary Church Association. She never missed an opportunity to address a children's meeting, class, or group of any size or kind. Children were of paramount importance to her and she never came before a group of them without the most thorough mental and spiritual preparation. Three generations of children have sat at her feet, heard her gracious words, and loved her kindly spirit. From all over the world they will come to call her blessed in the day of eternal rewards. As long as she was able, it was always a foregone conclusion that she would be elected to the position of Children's Evangelist by the annual conference of the M.C.A. In 1944, when it was evident that she must relinquish these important duties, she was given the honorary title of Children's Evangelist Emeritus, and Mrs. C. H. Wiederkehr was elected to give active leadership to the children's program. The work continues to go on with increasing success and enlarged ministry.

THE MISSIONARY YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

A much more aggressive young people's program began to develop in the late twenties and early thirties. While the Gleaners' work gave emphasis to the missionary aspect and provided an outlet for such interest and giving, there was needed a much broader program to embrace the total development of youth under active and well-organized leadership. In view of these needs a committee was appointed to investigate the work of the young people and to bring a report to the General Conference in 1926. In a preamble to several recom-

mendations the committee made a statement as follows: "We find that there is a great diversity of organizations, methods and materials used among the young people and Gleaners' organizations, and whereas the young people of today are the ones who shall bear the burden of the church of tomorrow, we feel that special attention should be given both to their training and spiritual needs." By special recommendation, the Superintendent of the Young People's Department was given special encouragement and support to carry out a wider ministry throughout the entire Association. A small pamphlet was also to be prepared to unify and make available in more popular form the programs for the young people's meetings. Youth rallies were also to be held in all of the districts in the interest of Christian fellowship among our young people and development of their spiritual lives. This program was pursued with increasing success through the early thirties.

District organizations to more effectively carry on the work came into being in the later thirties and a more aggressive program was instituted. In the Conference of 1945, the name, Missionary Youth Fellowship, was adopted as the official name of the young people's organization throughout the Association. A new and broader platform of objectives was incorporated in new by-laws approved by the same conference. These included the promotion and development of the spirituality of our young people, edification through Scriptural knowledge, enlistment in evangelistic and missionary effort at home and abroad through existing Association organizations, and the promotion of church loyalty and fellowship among the M. C. A. young people.

At the present time, all districts are completely

organized and carry on their wide and varied programs under the general supervision of the Superintendent of Young People's Work in the Association. Local, regional, and district rallies, youth camps, youth revivals, and the promotion of various types of local and denominational projects, have combined to enlarge and strengthen the program over that of earlier years.

The denominational office, Superintendent of Young People's Work, has been filled by many who have carried a burden for the work and who have made individual contributions to the furtherance of the program for the young people. Those who have held this office from the beginning of the department in 1915 are as follows:

Mrs. C. W. Oyer—1915-1925
Miss Zelma Hagar—1925-1926
C. J. Gerig—1926-1928
Oliver E. Steiner—1928-1930
Armin Steiner—1930-1931
Jared F. Gerig—1931-1939
Robert Strubhar—1939-1944
Harold Walker—1944-1948
Blanchard Amstutz—1948-

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Missionary Church Association has maintained a Sunday School Department since 1915. This department has been headed by an Association Sunday School Superintendent who was elected annually by the General Conference until 1949 when the term was extended to two years. The Superintendent is responsible for the development of the efficiency of the Sunday School, the promoting of Sunday School conven-

tions and rallies, and the general advancement of the work throughout the Association. Those who have held this position and their terms of office are as follows:

Simon S. Gerig—1915-1917
W. J. Amstutz—1917-1922
Norman Hirschy—1922-1925
Harvey Witmer—1925-1935
Clifford Grabill—1935-1936
Harvey Witmer—1936-1937
Harvey Mitchell—1937-1941
H. E. Wiswell—1941-1943
Pritchard Amstutz—1943-1944
S. J. Grabill—1944-

In the last five years a revived interest in Sunday School work has been in evidence. The Sunday School Convention for promotion and increased efficiency has been revived and the present and the future will see progress made along all lines of Sunday School endeavor. A ripened harvest field among children and young people constitutes the challenge of the present for this great work.

CHAPTER X

The Publishing Interests, Past, Present, and Future

The Publishing Department of the Missionary Church Association has been a limited department for many years. A small constituency, lack of finances, and probably lack of vision have all contributed to its failure to grow and progress. Those who have been given the administration of this phase of the work have been men busy and occupied with many other responsibilities and therefore unable to give the time necessary to its progress and success. In a consideration of the historical nature of the work, it is necessary, therefore, to face many years of slow effort and limited success. In the present, it is evident that new life and interest are being injected into the veins of this sluggish child of the church and the future is full of bright prospects and hopeful promises.

From the earliest years the work of the Publishing Department has been under the administration of a Publishing Committee elected in the first years by the Missionary Committee (now General Committee) and in later years by the General Conference. A Publishing Agent was elected for the first time in 1909 to supervise and promote the work. Mr. D. B. Basinger was the first elected to this office and he served until 1926. Mr. Basinger opened a printing establishment in Pandora, Ohio, in 1920, and at that time invited the Missionary Church Association to become a partner in the business. This invitation was not accepted since many voiced the opinion that a printing headquarters

should be established in Fort Wayne, Indiana, sometime in the future. Mr. S. S. Gerig of Fort Wayne, Indiana, succeeded Mr. Basinger as the Publishing Agent and considerable progress was made under his leadership from 1926 to 1945. Rev. Tillman Amstutz gave aggressive leadership to the work from 1945 to 1948 when much more progress was made in the promotion of a wider program of publishing interests. After Rev. Herald Welty had served for a little more than a year, Mr. Amstutz was reappointed in January of 1950 to give full time to the enlarged program.

OFFICIAL ORGANS

Rev. William Egle while associated with Rev. J. A. Sprunger at Berne, Indiana, began the publishing of a small German periodical called *"Der Botschafter des Heils in Christo"* (The Messenger of Salvation in Christ). This paper gave emphasis to the truths of the full Gospel and in the General Conference of 1903 in Groveland, Illinois, was recognized and approved as the official organ of the Missionary Church Association. Following its approval, it carried accounts of conference reports, missionary news and travel letters, and sermons. Rev. William Egle served as the editor of *The Botschafter* until 1927 with the exception of the years from 1919 to 1922 when Rev. H. C. Thiessen was the editor. Lack of subscriptions and possibly the growing lack of appeal of the German language eventually made the periodical an unprofitable investment and the paper was discontinued by conference action in 1927.

In view of the demand for an English publication, the first edition of *The Missionary Worker* was published on September 1, 1904. Both organs were published for twenty-three years and were the channels

for expressing the policy, vision, and message of the church. After the discontinuance of the *Botschafter,* the *Worker* became the single official journal of the Missionary Church Association. Rev. D. Y. Schultz furnished much of the original inspiration for the launching of the English publication. He also was the first editor serving in this capacity from 1904 to 1911. Other editors following in order with their terms of service were: Rev. C. W. Oyer, 1911-1922; B. F. Leightner, 1922-1923; Rev. H. C. Thiessen, 1923-1925; Rev J. A. Ringenberg, 1925-1939; Rev. Jared F. Gerig, 1939-1943; Rev. Harvey Mitchell, 1943-1947; and Rev. Ralph Ringenberg, 1947-.

The Missionary Worker, printed in English, reached a much larger constituency than the German paper, and had a special appeal to the young people. It recorded the early history and struggles of the denomination, the step by step progress of the construction of the first building at the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, travelogues by Rev. and Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer, reports of the work in various districts, sermons and articles on timely subjects, the "Sunshine Makers'" page by Mrs. Ramseyer, and other helpful and appropriate features. Mrs. C. W. Oyer supplied the material for a young people's page from 1908 to 1922. Sunday School Lesson comments were printed from the very first with the material being supplied by various writers. The *Worker* was dedicated to the presentation and promotion of worldwide missions and letters, news, and articles from the missionaries were regular features from the beginning. While the *Missionary Worker* has changed in many of its features and there is a constant effort made to keep its content and manner of presentation fresh and interesting, it has not changed in its original objectives to exalt Christ and present Him to the world

as the only Savior from sin. It has also served to bind together the work of the Missionary Church and to build up the believers in the Lord and in the faith.

The place of publication has varied across the passing years. The *Missionary Worker* was first published at Berne, Indiana for more than a year, then in Fort Wayne, Indiana for four years. Beginning with October 1, 1909, it was printed in Pandora, Ohio for many years. From 1931 to 1935, the printing was again done in Berne, Indiana; then in Pandora, Ohio from 1935 to 1938; and back again to Berne, Indiana in 1938 where it has since been published. Mr. D. B. Basinger of Pandora, Ohio, and Mr. C. H. Muselman of Berne, Indiana gave much time and faithful effort to the publication work. They always manifested more than a commerical interest in the work and have done their part in this work as a ministry unto the Lord.

THE CONSTITUTION

The *Constitution* of the Missionary Church Association in its original form was very brief and very simple. It was printed in both English and German in the same booklet. The fathers of the church were wise in building into the original constitution such basic principles and polices as to demand little change through the years. The German was soon dropped but no major revisions were made until 1916 when the Annual Conference adopted an enlarged Constitution embodying several important additions in keeping with the growth and progress of the Association's program as a whole. In the Annual Conferences of 1931 and 1932, another major revision was effected in keeping with further needs and problems growing out of an enlarging program. A standing Constitution Committee gives consideration constantly to all matters relative to constitutional change and such proposed changes

are brought in the form of recommendations to the General Conference.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For many years Sunday School lesson comments were published in the *Missionary Worker* on the International Sunday School Lesson Outlines. When the National Sunday School Association of the National Association of Evangelicals inaugurated a new outline series, an effort was immediately made by the Educational Committee to edit and publish a series of Sunday School Quarterlies. The 1946 Conference gave its hearty approval to this effort and various writers were appointed with Rev. Harvey Mitchell being selected as editor-in-chief. While a full series has not yet been made available, the adult and intermediate quarterlies were published under the name of *Bible Truth Series* and used first in the quarter beginning on January 1, 1947. This literature has had a good circulation both within and without the Missionary Church Association. It is the plan and vision of the Educational Committee to proceed as soon as possible with the publication of a full line of graded student and teacher quarterlies.

In the annual Conference of 1947, the Publishing Department brought a special recommendation to the effect that "whereas the M.C.A. Publishing Department is rapidly expanding to include publication of Sunday School Quarterlies, books by M.C.A. authors, a new minister's manual, and other items, and in view of the fact that these publications deserve acceptance beyond the confines of our Association, we believe it advisable to adopt a trade name for the Publication Department." It was therefore recommended and adopted that the name be the "Bible Truth Publishers."

BOOKSTORE

The Missionary Church Association has operated a small bookstore for many years in Schultz Hall of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute. For many years the deficit in the publication of the official journals of the denomination was met by the sale of books and Sunday School supplies. With the completion of the Ramseyer Memorial Headquarters Building, the Publishing Department and Bookstore were moved to their new quarters in the summer of 1950. The Bookstore and offices of the Publishing Department will occupy much larger space aimed at expansion and growth. The Department aims at the conducting of a much larger mail order business as well as equipping a local store for the sale of all types of church supplies, religious books, and Sunday School literature.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Very few books have been written or published through Association agencies. The disposition and facile pen for writing books seems to have been lacking, however a few publications have been of interest to the M. C. A. constituency. In the earlier years, the department printed some outstanding tracts and also supervised the German and English editions of *The Paraclete,* a book on the person and work of the Holy Spirit by D. Y. Schultz. In later years, the following books have been issue: *Jesus, the Healer,* by J. A. Ringenberg; *J. E. Ramseyer, Yet Speaking,* by Mrs. J. E. Ramseyer; *Dwell Deep,* sermons by J. E. Ramseyer, edited by S. A. Witmer; and a *Minister's Manual.* The Publishing Department has also printed in brochure form the Minutes of the Annual Conferences since 1937.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE FUTURE

The challenge of the publishing field in Christian lit-

erature is almost without limits. There must come a vision for this phase of the work which will lift it out of its limitations to the high plane of service and ministry of which it is worthy. The power of the printed page is an unused power among us. It is hoped that the Association will come to operate its own printing presses and that capable men among us will catch the vision and be moved by the Spirit of God to write the truth which God has given them.

CHAPTER XI

Doctrinal Development and Difficulties

The Missionary Church Association was founded upon a solid and sound doctrinal base. There has been a purposeful attempt to keep its message full-orbed and well-balanced and free from doctrinal hobbies and extremism. The fourfold Gospel was its battle cry from the very beginning and this Gospel won its way into the hearts of many accompanied with a deep moving of the Spirit of God. The founding fathers were men of deep conviction and settled loyalties. They loved the Bible and dedicated themselves to the propagation of the truth as it was revealed to them. Some of them paid a price for their love and consecration to truth but there was no wavering from the "thus saith the Lord."

Salvation and the new birth were undebatable tenets of the church from its earliest beginnings. It was understood by all that men must be born again and that regeneration was a work of grace in the hearts of men whereby they were made new creations in Christ Jesus. While the brief constitution drafted and approved by the first organizational conference of the M.C.A. in 1898 contained no doctrinal statement, it was never in doubt but that the new birth was one of the great doctrinal pillars upon which the church was to be built. The revival meetings and conventions leading up to the organization of the church were all characterized by deep conviction and genuine conversion. Throughout the more than fifty years of the church, there has been no apostasy in relation to this first and fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith.

Other vital tenets of the faith were also emphasized courageously and faithfully. It was later written that "this society had its origin in the convictions of certain men and women of God who felt the need of giving united testimony to the faith and experiences that were dear to them. These Christian believers stressed the baptism with the Holy Spirit as a definite crisis experience subsequent to conversion, and the truth of the imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . . . The position of the founders on the essential articles of faith and practice are accepted as being in substantial agreement with the Word of God, which is the final authority in all matters pertaining to the life and faith of the church. The Missionary Church Association is committed to the fundamental position that in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of the New Testament is given a pattern of the message to be preached; the principles of administration; the methods of evangelization; the basic form of church government, that are to be followed by every successive generation of the church until Jesus Christ comes again."

The great doctrine of sanctification was a crucial belief in the hearts of a small nucleus of men and women who had experienced something beyond regeneration and who had come into an effective ministry by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Baptism with the Holy Spirit was more than creed; it was Christ. It was more than a belief; it was a bequest of power. It has been the conscientious effort within the Association to present this necessary and vital truth in a sane, sound and scriptural method and message. It has been felt that it is not enough to stress subjective experience without balancing it with objective expression. Sanctification within must lead to service without. Perfect

love within must give way to perfect life without. With purity there must come practice and with cleansing, conduct. It was always emphasized that this experience was a crisis work, a second work of grace subsequent to regeneration. It involved death to self, an identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. The preaching of this truth with many responding to it and appropriating it for themselves brought conflict and crisis to the early brethren who dared not be untrue to the work of God in their own hearts. The preaching within the church has centered in the Scriptures on this great truth. Unscriptural terminology has been shunned as well as the misemphasis upon "the blessing" to the losing sight of "the Blesser." There is no encouragement given to seeking after manifestations and supernatural evidences, but there is a supreme emphasis put upon being filled with the Spirit and recognizing His supreme Lordship.

The position of the Missionary Church Association in regard to the crisis experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was severely tested in the early twenties. As early as April, 1917, it was evident that some schism was arising over the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Two entire sessions of the General Committee, an evening and morning session, on April 11 and 12, 1917, were spent "in the discussion of the doctrinal position of the Association with reference to the Holy Spirit." In the Conferences of 1922 held at Woodburn, Indiana, and 1923, held at Grabill, Indiana, this issue was brought to a head and considerable time was spent in debating it. Two schools of interpretation were in evidence both claiming to be true to the Constitution on the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer. It was evident however that it was a conflict between the original position of the Association and a school of interpretation

placing the emphasis upon a progressive sanctification wherein the crisis experience was lost. At the suggestion of several brethren, the Conference at Grabill in August, 1923, appointed a committee composed of six brethren to draw up a statement on the interpretation of the work of the Holy Spirit to serve as a basis of unity. The following resolution was drawn up and passed in the Conference of that year:

> "Whereas, in these latter days the enemy of our souls is endeavoring to bring confusion among God's children and lead them to extremes on different lines of Biblical truths, therefore be it resolved that this Conference of the M.C.A. go on record that in keeping with our Constitution we hold that the believer in Christ receives the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of life and sonship at regeneration (Rom. 8:9, 15; Gal. 4:6); and that subsequent to regeneration the believer should yield himself unreservedly to the Lord (Rom. 12:1; 6:13), and by faith make a definite crisis experience being variously called, the receiving of the Spirit (Acts 8:15), the baptism with the Spirit (Acts 1:5), the enduement 'with power from on high' (Luke 24:49), or the filling with the Spirit (Acts 2:4), as found in the Word of God; and that we further agree to grant each other the liberty to use any or all of these terms to express the experience of the deeper or the Spirit-filled life; and that we still further agree that every cause of dissension be removed, and that we love one another, with love unfeigned, trusting Him who is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. Amen."
>
> Signed,
> H. H. Amstutz
> G. J. Kliewer

H. E. Tropf
C. H. Muselman
D. C. Stucky
G. D. Wiederkehr

While the statement was well formulated and approved by the General Conference, the wounds were evidently too deep to be healed by the passing of a mere resolution. Before the next couple of years had gone by, several official brethren had left the church and a number of pastors and churches had also withdrawn. While the immediate losses did not seem great, it has been left to history to prove that here was a crisis which no doubt grieved the Spirit of God and paralyzed the efforts of the church for growth and expansion for a decade or more. It should be said moreover that such crises may serve a good end. They serve to crystallize and consolidate belief, bring into the open the secret spirit of mistrust and suspicion, eliminate the factors which foster dissension, and make possible a common ground for unity and oneness. Where all of these things cannot be realized, usually the crisis will bring a parting of the ways. Even this is good where agreement cannot be attained. Some of the brethren who withdrew in those days went on to highly successful and greatly blessed ministries elsewhere. Some who disagreed remained and became loyal to the work; some who left returned; but in it all there was a clearing of the doctrinal atmosphere on the sublime and important truth that the believer must be filled with the Spirit and that it is an important crisis wherein he meets certain scriptural conditions and exercises definite appropriating faith.

The truth of the premillennial coming of Christ met with much opposition during the formative days of the Missionary Church Association. It became the

inspiration for a new offensive toward world evangelism. In many churches, it was heresy to proclaim this truth, but wherever it was preached it created intense interest and brought new spiritual fervor. The last seventy-five years have brought a revival of this truth so dear to the heart of the apostolic church and then lost to the church for centuries. From its inception, the Missionary Church has taught that it is the business of the church to evangelize the world from which the Lord will call out a people for His Name. After this, He will return personally, bodily, and secretly, first to catch away His waiting and prepared bride; then after the tribulation period, to return visibly to the earth to establish the long-promised kingdom and to reign upon the earth a thousand years. This is the hope of the church to which the M.C.A. has subscribed from the beginning and which it holds as a stimulus for the present and a goal for the future.

The presentation of Jesus Christ to the world as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King was a task never taken lightly. Christ in His fourfold redemptive ministry was the hope of the world and the message of the church. These four pillars of truth were all indispensable to a full-orbed message and they were held up by the early leaders and brethren as a solemn responsibility for which they were accountable to God. Divine healing provided for in the atonement of Christ upon the Cross was preached and presented as God's remedy for sickness. Miraculous healings were common in the early years of the M.C.A. and divine healing services were held in conjunction with revival meetings and conventions. Wherever God manifested Himself, it was the usual thing for men to be saved, believers to be filled with the Spirit, and those who were sick to be healed. The work of God

cannot be limited in its manifestation and accomplishment. Throughout its history, the M.C.A. has given a sane and Biblical emphasis to this great truth and signs have followed those who believed not only in the homeland but on foreign fields. The great truth of the unchangeableness of Christ, "Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, and today, and forever," was sung and preached into the hearts of many until they believed it for their own spiritual and physical needs. "The Great Physician" and "Yesterday, Today, Forever" were songs much used to increase faith and bring blessing to many. If there has been a retreat anywhere along the doctrinal line, it probably has been in the loss of the bold and consistent practice of the truth of divine healing in all quarters of the Missionary Church Association. There is a theoretical holding of the doctrine but not the widespread teaching and practice of it as characterized the church in its early years.

No official position relative to Calvinism and Arminianism has ever been taken. It has been recognized that within the two theological positions there is a great overlapping of truth, that there is also truth and error in both systems, and that scriptural truth lies without doubt between the extremes of both. In the attempt to present a balanced message, sane and true to the Scriptures, it has been found that those adhering to both schools of thought have been blessed and greatly edified. The leaning of the constituency has been toward the Arminian viewpoint with of course some reservations. The Missionary Committee (now General Committee) in a meeting on March 6, 1912, held for the appointment of the teaching staff for the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, reappointed a certain teacher "with the understanding that he refrain from teaching his strong Calvinistic views." A special statement was

issued at a much later date, December 16, 1944, by a committee of three, the President, Vice-President, and Secretary of the Association, as follows:

> "It is our mutual understanding that, while the majority of the ministry and laity of the Missionary Church Association has been considered on the Arminian side of the question of the security of the saints, there has never been a statement in our Constitution on the question, nor has there ever been any action of Conference committing us to either side. Our position rather has been to the effect that there is truth and error in both systems of thought as such, and that the truth lies between the extremes of both. We do not believe the Bible to teach the unconditional security of the believer, but that it teaches and insists on a life of holiness, victory over sin, and separation from the world through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit."

The Missionary Church Association has always believed in those essential fundamentals such as the trinity of the Godhead, the deity of Jesus Christ, the inspiration and authority of the Bible as the Word of God, the creation and fall of man and his redemption through the sacrificial work of Christ on the cross, the unity and universality of the church in its invisible and mystical character, resurrection and immortality, judgment, heaven and hell. It is also believed that the Christian ordinances are outward rites appointed by Christ to be administered in the churches, not as having any saving merit, but as visible signs and seals of the facts and realities of spiritual salvation. Baptism by immersion only and the Lord's Supper constitute the two ordinances which have been observed and approved from the beginning. The washing of the saint's feet not as an ordinance but as a practice

in obedience to the command of Christ was encouraged. This practice has been discontinued in the majority of the churches where it once was an established custom. In many others it was never practiced.

Separation from sin and the world was preached and stressed from the earliest years. Plainness of dress was much more in evidence then than in more recent years, and the principle of separation was pressed into the social life and business relations. The use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages was condemned and the holding of membership in secret societies or having other unholy affiliations was forbidden. Marriage was considered a sacred institution ordained of God, and in the second Conference in 1900, a resolution was passed which has been adhered to through the years "that we shall consider it contrary to the Bible that believers should be married to unbelievers, and that our ministers should oppose it and not officiate at such marriages." The stand on divorce makes room for divorce only on the ground of adultery, and neither party shall have the right to remarry another as long as they both shall live.

The Association recognizes civil government as being ordained of God and that it is the obligation and duty of every Christian to pray for those in authority and to be submissive and obedient in all things except those opposed to the revealed will of God. The M.C.A. has been considered one of the "peace churches" in relation to war and military service. It is believed to be contrary to the teachings of Christ and the New Testament for Christians to take up arms and engage in combat service. In view of this, the majority of young men called from Missionary Churches have chosen to go into non-combatant service. While the church has voiced its stand, it has not sat in judgment

upon those who have felt at liberty to enter the regular branches of military service. The individual conscience has been recognized as a guide in this matter as in others, and where the grace of God has brought salvation to the heart, it is expected that the Christian shall act and live in keeping with Gospel truth and the high calling of their relation to Christ. In keeping with the Scriptures, it is expected that members of the church shall affirm instead of taking oaths, provision for which is made in the laws of the country.

The Missionary Church Association has adhered for the more than a half century of its existence to a well-rounded evangelical creed. It has sought to be more than evangelical; it has endeavored to be evangelistic. It has done more than demand loyalty to a creed; it has sought to exalt and preach Christ. Dr. Simpson's famous song, "Jesus Only," was widely used in the early years and epitomized the whole message of the Association:

"Jesus only is our message,
Jesus all our theme shall be;
We will lift up Jesus ever,
Jesus only will we see.

"Jesus only is our Savior,
All our guilt He bore away,
All our righteousness He gives us,
All our strength from day to day.

"Jesus is our Sanctifier,
Cleansing us from self and sin,
And with all His Spirit's fullness,
Filling all our hearts within.

"Jesus only is our Healer,
All our sicknesses He bare,

And His risen life and fullness,
All His members still may share.

"Jesus only is our power,
His the gift of Pentecost,
Jesus, breathe Thy power upon us,
Fill us with the Holy Ghost.

"And for Jesus we are waiting,
Listening for His Advent call;
But 'twill still be Jesus only,
Jesus ever, all in all.

"Jesus only, Jesus ever,
Jesus all in all we sing,
Savior, Sanctifier, Healer,
Glorious Lord and Coming King."

CHAPTER XII

Denominational Relations and the Fraternal Committee

A spirit of cooperation and interdenominationalism has prevailed through the years in the work and interests of the Missionary Church Association. There has been a consistent effort made to work together with others of like precious faith and interests. Especially has this been true with the Evangelical Mennonites[1], the United Missionary Church[2], and the Christian and Missionary Alliance. A close fellowship with these three churches has been the source of rich blessings in the work of God.

In the earliest years of the Association it was common for an exchange of delegates to take place in the conferences of these churches and the Missionary Church Association. At the invitation of the General Conference of the M.C.A. these three churches have also for many years appointed a member representing them to the Governing Board of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute. Since the sending out of missionaries was largely carried on through the instrumentality of other agencies and boards, it followed that the Christian and Missionary Alliance was used as such a channel more than any other. While many other channels were used, more missionaries were sent to foreign fields through the C. & M. A. board than through all others combined.

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[1]Formerly the Defenseless Mennonites.
[2]Formerly the Mennonite Brethren in Christ.

Inquiries were received in 1922 from the Evangelical Mennonites and the United Missionary Church relative to a basis of cooperation in the Bible Institute work in Fort Wayne. A blessed relationship was established in this respect which continued through many years. Not only were these groups invited to share in the government of the Institute but a most cordial fellowship developed through the training of many students who came from these denominations to get their preparation for home and foreign service. The background of this training at the Fort Wayne Bible Institute of leaders, pastors, missionaries, and laymen has created a tie which has made for oneness of spiritual aims and interests.

The General Committee meeting on December 30, 1925, projected the idea that fraternal meetings be held with the Evangelical Mennonites. Growing out of these meetings some efforts developed toward the organic union of these two bodies. The General Conference meeting on August 23, 1927 went on record as "favoring past efforts toward organic union and until such is effected, we cooperate with the Defenseless Mennonites to the greatest possible extent, and delegate the General Committee to act for the Missionary Church Association in furthering the work of cooperation." A recommendation which was approved was brought to the Conference in 1928 "that the Mennonite Brethren in Christ be invited to attend any further meetings since it has been suggested by one of their leading brethren." In these years encouragement was given to the union idea but in the early and middle thirties the interest waned and finally exhausted itself without any definite action being taken.

The matter of closer fellowship and union was revived in the General Conference of 1939 when Dr.

J. A. Huffman and Rev. R. P. Ditmer of the United Missionary Church visited the Conference. In addresses at that time they encouraged taking steps to promote friendly relations and the possible merging of denominations.

The General Committee in 1940 appointed a Fraternal Committee to pursue and promote these established friendships. The original committee of three members, S. A. Witmer, M. N. Amstutz, and J. A. Ringenberg, was increased to six by the adding of E. F. Clauser, Clarence Gerig, and Armin Steiner. This enlarged committee had two meetings in the conference year of 1941-42 with a like number of brethren from the Indiana-Ohio and Michigan Conferences of the United Missionary Church. The discussions in these meetings centered largely around the doctrine and polity of the two churches. The doctrinal creeds of the two churches were found to be in essential agreement on all major and fundamental points. In denominational organization, it was found that there were major differences and that if a denominational merger were effected, it would be necessary to work out a form of government which would be different from both but which would incorporate the best points of each system. It was concluded at the second meeting of this year by the committee that "we reiterate the statement made in the previous meeting on our agreement in doctrine; and that we go on record as further agreeing that some progress has been made in formulating a tentative plan of church polity that might be mutually satisfactory, and that while a satisfactory solution of differences has not been reached, yet it is our conviction that a solution can be found under the leadership of the Holy Spirit if we definitely feel that it is God's will for a merger to be effected."

In the Conference of 1942, it was recommended by the Fraternal Committee that this matter be made a subject of earnest prayer and that the General Conference appoint a committee to continue the work begun and to carry on similar exploratory discussions with other like-minded groups who may be disposed to consider closer fellowship. The same committee was appointed by the Conference to carry out the recommendations made and adopted.

A joint committee meeting was held on July 21, 1943 with brethren of the Evangelical Mennonite Church to discuss the possibilities of united missionary work. The discussion at this time eventually took a more definite trend toward a union of the two Conferences rather than a united effort in missionary work only. Since no definite plan was formulated for the proposed missionary work, and since there seemed to be a real desire on the part of the joint committee for a closer fellowship which might eventually result in a merger, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the combined committee: "Be it resolved that we encourage the further exploration of the possibility of closer cooperation by urging a meeting of our Unity Committees." The General Conference of the M.C.A. in 1943 went on record "encouraging the Fraternal Committee to continue in the direction in which they are moving regarding the matter" of union.

Outstanding progress was made by the joint committees during the following year. Several meetings of the committees resulted in the drawing up of a proposed constitution which embodied articles of faith and basis of church government which would be mutually agreeable. It was stated by the joint committee that after a consideration of the "things wherein there are differences, and after considering the problems

that might be barriers to fellowship and unity, we feel that the Holy Spirit led to a basis whereby the desired unity could be effected." Copies of the proposed constitution drawn up by the Fraternal Committees of the Missionary Church Association and the Evangelical Mennonites were then distributed to the members of the General Conference of the M.C.A. for their thoughtful perusal before the consideration of a recommendation from the Committees "that the Conferences express their approval or disapproval of the Constitution as a basis for uniting the Conferences and, that, if the Conferences approve of this as a basis for consideration of a union, the Constitution be published in pamphlet form and freely circulated throughout our memberships for at least one year before taking a final vote of approval or adoption." The General Conference of the M.C.A. in 1944 before adjournment passed unanimously that the recommendations be adopted and to approve the proposed constitution submitted by the Fraternal Committee as a basis of which union may be considered.

The Fraternal Committee of the M.C.A. reported to the 1946 General Conference that the Evangelical Mennonite Conference had not yet approved the proposed constitution as a basis for the consideration of union. At a single meeting of the year between the two groups further consideration was given to points of difference and attempts made to reconcile conflicts and answer problems. The Committee brought further recommendations to the conference of that year regarding the retaining of the name, Missionary Church Association, and that the Constitution be presented to our churches providing the Evangelical Mennonites accept it as a working basis. It was also recommended that "if a large majority (at least 90% of our church-

es) is in favor, then union be made contingent on working out a mutually agreeable arrangement in the communities where there are churches of both conferences." These recommendations were adopted by a ballot vote.

While the efforts for union reached a high point in 1946, it was reported in the Conference of 1947 that little progress had been made, although the question of union was still a very live issue. Since that time the interest has somewhat waned and active efforts have ceased. It should be recognized however that the issues are not dead and that many in the Conferences involved believe that all hands would be strengthened and that the Lord would be greatly glorified by not only an organized oneness of His people but by a spiritual unity wrought by the work of God's Spirit.

The organization, work, and program of the National Association of Evangelicals was presented to the General Conference of 1943 by Rev. J. A. Ringenberg. The Conference of that year went on record favoring affiliation with this Association and left the actual joining to be effected by the General Committee. Many benefits have accrued to the M.C.A. through this larger affiliation with evangelicals from many churches and denominations. The N.A.E. seeks to provide a united voice in regard to matters of interest to all evangelicals; it provides an interdenominational medium of spiritual fellowship; it protects the freedoms of evangelicals and promotes their interests in the fields of Gospel broadcasting, foreign missions, evangelism, education, and many other phases of common endeavor. The M.C.A. has been officially represented on the Board of Administration of the N.A.E. and on the Evangeli-

cal Foreign Missions Association Executive Committee.

The attempt to keep free from spiritual isolationism and a spirit of sectarianism has borne fruitage in a widening fellowship, a growing vision and understanding of the larger work of God in the world, and the joys and blessings which attend an interest and cooperation in sharing with others.

CHAPTER XIII

A Memorial To Rev. J. E. Ramseyer

The Conference year of 1943-44 was a memorable one in that two of the early pioneers and founders of the Missionary Church Association were called to their eternal rewards. Rev. J. E. Ramseyer and Rev. William Egle, men of vision, spiritual insight, and zeal, had fought a good fight, finished their course, and had kept the faith. In the same year another veteran of the faith, Rev. Hiram Amstutz, also went to be with the Lord after a prolonged period of illness. The conference of 1944 assembled in solemn remembrance of these "three veterans of the Cross who joined the church triumphant during the 1943-1944 conference year."

Soon after the home-going of Rev. J. E. Ramseyer, it became the urgent feeling of many that a suitable memorial should be erected in his honor and to his memory. It was in keeping with this feeling that the Secretary of the Association brought to the conference floor in 1944 a recommendation from the General Committee. The recommendation in part read as follows:

> WHEREAS there has been expressed among the constituency of the Missionary Church Association a rather general desire for the erection of a memorial to our late President, J. E. Ramseyer, and
>
> WHEREAS it seems to be in keeping with the practical ideals of Brother Ramseyer that such a memorial should be of a useful nature, and
>
> WHEREAS there has become increasingly ap-

parent a variety of needs for housing and office space in connection with the work of the Association and the Bible Institute,

THEREFORE, we, the General Committee, respectfully recommend to the Conference:

1. That the Missionary Church Association and its subsidiaries undertake the erection of a memorial in the form of a headquarters building, on the site which has been acquired for that purpose on the southeast corner of South Wayne Avenue and Rudisill Boulevard.

2. That the title to the memorial shall be held in the name of the Missionary Church Association.

3. That the building shall be so constructed that it will meet the needs of the Association and the Bible Institute, such as Association offices, committee rooms, book store, apartments, rooms, and the proper equipment, but not necessarily limited thereto.

4. That its use shall be directed by a committee of not less than six, two-thirds of whom shall be appointed by the General Committee, and one-third by the Board of Trustees of the Bible Institute, either from among their respective members or others, as they may deem wise.

The above recommendation was adopted with the further recommendation that the Conference elect a Building Committee of nine which shall have special authorization to determine the size and type of building needed, to engage an architect, to estimate the approximate cost, and to solicit and receive funds. A nominating committee presented a ballot of eighteen names from which the following nine were elected: Quinton Evérest, South Bend, Indiana; N. E. Roth, Grabill, Indiana; Earl Leonard, Peoria, Illinois; Odell Har-

rold, Fort Wayne, Indiana; L. Shirl Hatfield, Pandora, Ohio; F. W. Lagerholm, Chicago, Illinois; S. A. Lehman, Fort Wayne, Indiana; C. H. Muselman, Berne, Indiana; and Eli Steiner, Lafayette, Indiana.

At the first meeting of the Building Committee, S. A. Lehman was elected as Chairman and J. A. Ringenberg and S. S. Gerig were added to the Committee as Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Bert Hollipeter and Marion Lochner of Fort Wayne, Indiana, and J. Francis Chase of Chicago, Illinois, were also added to the Committee as additional members. An Executive Committee was also appointed at the initial meeting, and Leroy Bradley, of Fort Wayne, Indiana, was engaged as the architect.

In the Conference of 1945, the Building Committee reported that "it had been exceedingly difficult to make the progress desired because of the fact that nearly every contact was slowed up through shortage of help." It was reported that the lots on the southeast corner of South Wayne Avenue and Rudisill Boulevard had been secured through the generous gifts of six friends who contributed $1000.00 each to make up the purchase price of $6000.00. Several thousands of dollars had already been raised toward the project largely through the Alumni of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute.

During the Conference year of 1945-46, Mr. Charles Lauby gave full time to soliciting funds for the Ramseyer Memorial Building. At the end of the conference year in August, 1946, the treasurer reported that $18,361.67 had been rasied in cash and pledges. Mr. Lauby continued in 1947 to travel extensively throughout the Association presenting the Memorial project to churches in public services and to individuals in private. A very excellent reception was given him and a good response was made so that at the end of the year

in August the balance in cash and pledges had jumped to $53,854.66.

In the conference of August, 1947, a joint recommendation by the General Committee and the Governing Board of the Fort Wayne Bible Institute was presented to the Conference for prayerful consideration. The report and recommendations presented were as follows:

To the General Conference:

The General Committee of the Missionary Church Association and the Governing Board of the Bible Institute wish jointly to present for consideration the following report and recommendations in reference to the Ramseyer Memorial Building:

1. Serious consideration has been given to the advisability of dividing the Ramseyer Memorial building project by which the respective needs of the Association and the Institute would be taken care of separately. The following advantages have been cited:

(1) Each institution, particularly the Association, would have individual recognition. The building for the Association headquarters would be recognized as such and would not be confused with the Institute.

(2) Separation of the project would result in simplified management by eliminating a joint body of administrators and employing existing agencies. The possible difficulties of joint control would be avoided.

(3) Since the Institute is acquiring more property for future development, a school memorial to J. E. Ramseyer might better be built on Institute land than on the limited lot on the corner of Rudisill and South Wayne.

(4) Dividing a building project of this size, would enable a beginning to be made relatively soon on one part, whereas a considerable time might elapse before the larger project could be undertaken; in the end both might be realized sooner.

(5) A two-story building would be more acceptable and practicable for the size lot that has been provided for the Ramseyer Memorial on the corner of South Wayne and Rudisill.

2. It is therefore recommended that the project be divided as follows:

(1) That the one project be known as the Association Headquarters Building: A Memorial to J. E. Ramseyer; that the present committee for the Ramseyer Memorial be dissolved, and that a new committee not to exceed twelve members be appointed to carry forward to completition a headquarters building for the Missionary Church Association; that the ten members of the present Committee who are members of Missionary churches be appointed members of the new building committee with the authority to increase their membership to no more than twelve.

(2) That the assets, in monies and pledges, that will be directed to the Bible Institute be committed to the Governing Board to meet the need for living quarters and to further the erection of a memorial to J. E. Ramseyer as time and conditions become opportune.

3. It is further recommended that the Association Headquarters Building Committee be authorized to proceed with building as soon as possible; that 70 per cent of the estimated cost be required in pledges and/or cash before construction can begin; that the Building Committee be authorized on behalf of the Trustees of the Association to negotiate such loans as may be necessary for the erection of the building.

4. It is further recommended that if Conference deems it advisable to divide the project that the following plan be adopted to divide monies and pledges already made for the combined memorial:

(1) That the site on the corner of South Wayne and Rudisill which has already been purchased for the site of the Ramseyer Memorial be the site of the Association Headquarters Building and continue to be the property of the Association and to be operated exclusively by its administrators; that the consent of the six donors who gave $1,000 each be sought for this modification.

(2) That the monies paid and the pledges made by the Bible Institute Fellowship Circle be directed to the trust of the Governing Board of the Bible Institute since they were primarily given by Institute constituency for Institute needs, unless donors expressly indicate a preference otherwise.

(3) That unspecified sums be considered as having been allocated for promotional costs.

(4) That the remaining known donors be given the opportunity of determining whether they wish their gifts to go toward either or both the Association headquarters building or to the Bible Institute for a future project to memorialize J. E. Ramseyer, and that they be informed that the Association Headquarters Building is to be the first building erected.

The joint recommendation in its entirety was adopted by the Conference.

In the Conference of 1948, it was reported that the donors toward the original Ramseyer Memorial project had designated that 89% of their gifts should be direct-

ed toward the Ramseyer Memorial Headquarters Building of the Association. After 11% of the funds had been turned over to the Fort Wayne Bible Institute, there remained a balance of $44,822.16 for the Headquarters project. The Conference also authorized the Building Committee to begin building operations as soon as 60% of the proposed cost was on hand in either cash or pledges. The estimated total cost of the project was $138,940.73 and the amount raised at the beginning of building operations was $83,500.08.

In June, 1949, bids for the proposed building were received with eight bidders. The contract was let to the Max Irmscher Construction Company of Fort Wayne, Indiana and ground-breaking services were held on Sunday afternoon, July 13, 1949.

The building completed provides for general offices, a chapel, committee rooms, seven apartments, several single dormitory rooms, a book store, and a well-lighted basement with utility and store rooms. The President of the Missionary Church Association occupies one of the larger apartments; the custodian a smaller apartment; and missionaries on furlough the other apartments.

The building was completed in June, 1950, and offices were moved from Schultz Hall of the Bible Institute. Occupants including the President, three missionary families, and the custodian also moved into the building in the same month.

The Dedicatory Service was held on August 13, 1950, the opening Sunday of the Central District Convention. Much thanksgiving ascended to God for this excellent building, built in troublous times, without delay and mishap, to be used for the furtherance of the Gospel and the glory of God.

CHAPTER XIV

A Summary of Works and Workers

The following classification of churches is made alphabetically according to states, and under the state chronologically according to organization or admittance to the Missionary Church Association. When the fact that the church is organized is mentioned, that fact also represents its admittance to the M.C.A. When the fact of admittance is mentioned it is understood that the church was organized for some time prior to its admittance. Some organized churches are affiliated with the M.C.A. and do not have the full privileges nor powers of member churches. It is impossible to list all of the pastors who have served in any one church, so the first or founding pastor is named and also the present pastor. Some churches are just beginning and are therefore still unorganized. Some have existed through a period of years and then have been discontinued. These churches have served their day and their communities and have been closed due to various circumstances. The founding and organization of local churches is one of the greatest challenges facing the M.C.A. at the present time.

CHURCHES

ARIZONA

PHOENIX, First Missionary Church, organized 1906. John Imbach, first pastor; Tillman Habegger, present pastor.

Eastside Missionary Church, admitted 1947. Burley Clay, first pastor; LeRoy Bennett, present pastor.

YUMA, Yuma Missionary Church, unorganized.

A. R. Booher, first pastor; Wade Parker, present pastor.

ARKANSAS

VANDERVOORT, Vandervoort Missionary Church, admitted 1949. Walter Mease, present pastor.

CALIFORNIA

DENAIR, Denair Missionary Church, organized 1906. N. J. Witmer, first pastor; John Henry Boswell, present pastor.

DUARTE, Duarte Missionary Church, organized 1950. Milton Deming, present pastor.

VAN NUYS, First Missionary Church, organized 1916. John Imbach, first pastor; Cornelius Vlot, present pastor.

LOMITA, Lomita Missionary Church, admitted 1941. David Shank, first pastor; Frank Christiansen, present pastor.

ONTARIO, Laird Community Church, admitted 1945. John Imbach, first pastor; Weaver Hess, present pastor.

MODESTO, First Missionary Church, admitted 1948. Jake Schierling, first pastor; Burley Clay, present pastor.

THOUSAND OAKS, Calvary Missionary Church, admitted 1948.

CULVER CITY, Community Missionary Church, admitted 1949. Lawrence Pine, first pastor; Marvin Parker, present pastor.

COMPTON, Compton Missionary Church, unorganized. Edgar Neuenschwander, present pastor.

STOCKTON, Oak Park Missionary Church, admitted 1949. Gordon A. Wood, first pastor; Rolland Boswell, present pastor.

LOS ANGELES, First Missionary Church (Span-

ish), admitted August, 1950. Jose Ybarra Soltero, pastor.

ILLINOIS

GROVELAND, Groveland Missionary Church, organized 1901. John C. Birkey, first pastor; Vernon Peterson, present pastor.

PEORIA, Mount Olive Missionary Church, organized 1908. Sam D Burkey, first pastor; J. J. Klopfenstein, present pastor.

PEORIA HEIGHTS, Olivet Missionary Church, organized. Earl B. Leonard, first pastor; Louis Strahm, present pastor.

EAST PEORIA, Bethany Missionary Church, organized 1946. Earl B. Leonard, first pastor; Franklin May, present pastor.

CHICAGO, Humboldt Park Gospel Tabernacle, admitted 1939. Edison Habegger, first pastor; Ben Jennings, present pastor.

INDIANA

BERNE, First Missionary Church, organized as United Missionary Church in 1896; admitted 1898. William Egle, first pastor; J. Pritchard Amstutz, present pastor.

West Berne Missionary Church, organized 1898. Joseph Egly, first pastor; Oscar Eicher, present pastor.

GRABILL, Grabill Missionary Church, organized 1901. David Roth, first pastor; Armin Steiner, present pastor.

FORT WAYNE, First Missionary Church, organized 1905. D. Y. Schultz, first pastor; Clayton D. Steiner, present pastor.

Hollywood Missionary Church, organized 1930. Clarence H. Wiederkehr, first pastor; Francis de Caussin, present pastor.

Prairie Grove Missionary Church, unorganized. W. O. Klopfenstein, first pastor; Paul Stauffer, present pastor.

Harvester Missionary Church, organized 1933. John Rohrs, first pastor; Carl Parlee, present pastor.

Northside Missionary Church, organized. Clinton Moser, first pastor; C. B. Vollmar, present pastor.

Curdes Avenue Missionary Church, admitted 1941. Frank Albright, first pastor; John Caddy, present pastor.

Holton Avenue Missionary Church, admitted 1941. V. O. Harrold, first pastor; W. H. Lugibihl, present pastor.

WOODBURN, Woodburn Missionary Church, organized 1907. John R. Yaggy, first pastor; Clinton Moser, present pastor.

ANGOLA, Fairview Missionary Church, organized Nov., 1928. J .J. Klopfenstein, first pastor; Ellis Roth, present pastor.

AUBURN, Auburn Missionary Church, organized Nov., 1931. Jared F. Gerig, first pastor; M. N. Amstutz, present pastor.

YODER, Yoder Missionary Church, organized 1930. Abraham Froese, first pastor; Charles Kauffman, present pastor.

DECATUR, Decatur Missionary Church, admitted 1944. Charles Glen, first pastor; Herald Welty, present pastor.

MOORESVILLE, Grace Missionary Church, organized 1950. LeRoy Rusher, present pastor.

KANSAS

NICKERSON, Nickerson Missionary Church, organized 1899, dissolved ten years later. N. J. Witmer, first pastor.

ELBING, Elbing Missionary Church, organized 1902. G. J. Kliewer, first pastor; Eli Cook, present pastor.

CONCORD, Concord Missionary Church, organized. G. J. Kliewer, first pastor; Raymond I. Laird, present pastor.

BUCKLIN, Liberty Missionary Church, organized. Doyle Carpenter, present pastor.

STERLING, Sterling Missionary Church, admitted 1941. H. L. Mitchell, first pastor; Elmer Egle, present pastor.

DODGE CITY, First Missionary Church, admitted 1940. Aaron Schweitzer, first pastor; Clarence Gerig, present pastor.

HUTCHINSON, Hutchinson Missionary Church, unorganized. Robert Quay, first pastor.

KENTUCKY

BIGGS, Open Bible Church, affiliated. Elmer Wagler, present pastor.

MICHIGAN

ELKTON, Elkton Missionary Church, admitted 1898. J. E. Ramseyer, first pastor; Russell Persons, present pastor.

DETROIT, First Missionary Church, organized. D. C. Stucky, first pastor. Became independent in 1923.

Eastlawn Missionary Church, organized 1918. H. E. Tropf, first pastor; George Agin, present pastor.

ROSEVILLE, Roseville Missionary Church, organized 1929. Alfred Jacobs, first pastor; Glen Head, present pastor.

ROYAL OAK, First Missionary Church, admitted 1937. M. N. Amstutz, first pastor; J. Gaylord Lehman, present pastor.

FLINT, First Missionary Church, admitted 1940. William Schwab, first pastor; Forest Kuhn, present pastor.

JACKSON, Vandercook Lake Missionary Church, organized. Simon Schindler, first pastor; John W. Teale, present pastor.

East South Street Missionary Church, organized. Harold Warner, first pastor; John W. Teale, present pastor.

Lansing Missionary Church, admitted 1940. James Lambert, pastor.

North Street Bible Church, admitted 1945. Roy D. Ramseyer, first pastor; Norman Rettig, present pastor.

MIDLAND, Midland Missionary Church, unorganized. Alfred Jacobs, first pastor; Lyle Steiner, present pastor.

STURGIS, Sturgis Missionary Church, admitted 1945. Jess Neuenschwander, first pastor; Alonzo Randall, present pastor.

LOOMIS, Loomis Missionary Church, admitted 1947. John W. Teale, first pastor; Leonard Smith, present pastor.

EAST DETROIT, East Detroit Missionary Church, unorganized. Francis McAuley, present pastor.

NEBRASKA

WAUNETA, Eden Missionary Church. Church started in 1891 by Rev. William Egle. Ezra Zimmerman, present pastor.

MISSOURI

WEST PLAINS, West Plains Missionary Church, unorganized. Roy Whittum, present pastor.

OHIO

PANDORA, Pandora Missionary Church, organiz-

ed 1900. C. W. Oyer, first pastor; Arnold Schmidt, present pastor.

CLEVELAND, First Missionary Church, organized 1910. Frank E. Hausser, first pastor; Floyd Klotzbach, present pastor.

Brooklyn Missionary Church, admitted 1940. E. F. Clauser, first pastor; William Whiteman, present pastor.

Brookside Missionary Church, admitted 1942. J. D. Blake, first pastor; Frank J. Foster, present pastor.

Memphis Avenue Missionary Church, organized 1950. Ralph Ringenberg, present pastor.

SWANTON, Swanton Missionary Church, organized 1904. S. S. Gerig, first pastor; Maxwell Heller, present pastor.

ARCHBOLD, Archbold Missionary Church, organized 1905. Chris Fligginger, first pastor; Ellis Roth, present pastor.

PETTISVILLE, Pettisville Missionary Church, organized 1905. Christ Fligginger, first pastor; Vincent Rupp, present pastor.

LIMA, First Missionary Church, admitted 1912. A. D. Welty, first pastor; Clarence Wiederkehr, present pastor.

BLUFFTON, Bluffton Missionary Church, organized 1928. Clifford Grabill, first pastor; Robert Welch, present pastor.

CLYDE, Clyde Missionary Church, organized. Simon Schindler, first pastor; Norman Moser, present pastor.

SYLVANIA, Sylvania Missionary Church, admitted 1941. L. J. Welsh, first pastor; Karl Kerlin, present pastor.

OTTAWA, Ottawa Missionary Church, admitted 1942. Gideon Niswander, first pastor; Paul Grabill, present pastor.

LIMA, Faith, Hope and Love Mission, affiliated. Walter Grossman, pastor.

TOLEDO, Redeemer Missionary Church, admitted 1944. Eldon Mitchell, present pastor.

HAMILTON, Calvary Missionary Church, admitted 1945. Roy D. Ramseyer, present pastor.

NEW MIAMI, First Missionary, admitted 1945. J. R. Robbins, first pastor; Frank Denninger, present pastor.

OVERPECK, Overpeck Missionary Church, unorganized. Gene Ponchott, first pastor; Henry Hewitt, present pastor.

DELTA, Fulton Union Church, affiliated. Norman Rettig, first pastor; Max Applegate, present pastor.

LIMA, Union Chapel, affiliated. Edward Pfund, first pastor; Herman Wagner, present pastor.

OREGON

ROSEBURG, Green Community Church, admitted 1950.

PENNSYLVANIA

ALLENTOWN, First Missionary Church, organized. Alfred M. and E. F. Clauser, first pastors; Edwin S. Stetser, present pastor.

FLEETWOOD, Fleetwood Missionary Church, organized. A. W. Weikel, first pastor; Robert Harle, present pastor.

MACUNGIE, Baptist Missionary Church, admitted 1944. Cornelius Vlot, first pastor; George Condit, present pastor.

TENNESSEE

HUMBOLDT, Humboldt Missionary Church, unorganized. Jess Neuenschwander, present pastor.

HAWAII

KOLOA, Koloa Missionary Church, admitted 1946. William Casterson, present pastor.

KALAHEO, Kalaheo Missionary Church, unorganized. Dorothy Rothfuss, first pastor; Don Rohrs, present pastor.

Workers

The following summary of workers in the homeland constitutes as complete a list as could be compiled. It is recognized that many who are included in the list of foreigin missionaries also gave time in the homeland but the names are left to stand in the list which represents the greatest share of their ministry. Many faithful workers have served sacrificially and faithfully in the days that are past and are now in heaven with Christ. The memory of all such is a constant blessing to succeeding generations. They beckon to deeper sacrifices and to a closer walk with God.

Agin, George
Albright, Frank
Albro, Arthur
*Amstutz, Hiram H.
Amstutz, Will
Amstutz, Allen
Amstutz, Jess
Amstutz, Menno
Amstutz, J. Pritchard
Amstutz, Tillman
Amstutz, Blanchard
Anderson, LaVerne

Birkey, John C.
Boswell, R. C.
Boswell, John
Brennan, William
Brown, O. Carl
*Burkey, Sam D.

Caddy, John
Casterson, William
Caulkins, William
Christensen, Frank E.
*Christner, Jacob J.
Clay, Burley
Clauser, Alfred M.
Clauser, Edgar F.
Condit, George
Cox, Samuel
Cox, William

Demmin, Daniel

Egle, Elmer
*Egle, William
Egly, Joseph
Eicher, Cyril H.
Eicher, Oscar

*Fliginger, Chris
Fliginger, Jacob J.
Foster, J. Frank
*Francis, Thomas
Frazee, W. D.
Furman, Clarence

George, Lewis
*Gerig, Sam
Gerig, Simon S.
Gerig, Clarence R.
Gerig, Chris J.
Gerig, Jared F.
Glock, J. Frank
Grieder, J. A.
Grabill, Clifford
Grabill, Samuel J.
Grenert, Henry
Grossman, Walter

Habegger, Edison
Habegger, Tillman
Hager, Albert
Harrold, V. O.
Hausser, Frank
Haller, Herbert
Harle, Robert
Harrie, Wilson
Harris, Lynn
Head, Glen
Headrick, L. T.
Heller, Maxwell
Hewitt, George
Hirschy, Norman
Hondrich, Mose

Imbach, John
Imler, Charles
Isbel, R. L.

*Jacobs, Alfred
Janzen, William C.
Jenks, Alfred
Jennings, Ben

Kerlin, Karl
*Kinzer, Zearle
Kirk, Keith H.
Kliewer, Gerhart P. Sr.
Kliewer, Gerhart P. Jr.
Klunzinger, George R.
Klopfenstein, Joseph J.
*Klopfenstein, Henry J.
Klopfenstein, Sol
Klopfenstein, Weldon O.
Klotzbach, Floyd
Kuhn, Forest
Kuhnle, Ernest

Lambert, J. C.
Lauby, John E.
*Leightner, B. F.

Lehman, Jasper
Lehman, J. Gaylord
Leonard, Earl B.
Lenz, Michael
*Lugibihl, Benjamin P.
Lugibihl, Walter H.

Magary, Robert G.
May, Franklin
McHatton, Charles
McHatton, Glen
Miller, D. F.
Mitchell, Eldon
Mitchell, Harvey
Moser, Clinton
Moser, Norman

Neuenschwander, Arthur
Neuenschwander, Edgar II
Neuenschwander, Elmer
Neuenschwander, Jess
Niswander, Dwight

Oyer, Ben M.
Oyer, C. W.
Oyer, John

Parker, Floyd
Parker, Marvin
Parlee, Carl
Peterson, Vernon
*Pfund, Edward
Pine, Lawrence

Rager, Paul
*Ramseyer, Joseph E.
*Ramseyer, Henry E.
Ramseyer, Michael E.
Ramseyer, Roy D.
Randall, Alonzo D.
Ratslaff, John
Regier, John R.
Rettig, Norman
Rice, Randall
Ringenberg, Gerald
Ringenberg, Jonas A.
Ringenberg, Loyal R.
Ringenberg, Ralph
Robbins, J. R.
Ross, Robert
Rohrs, John
*Roth, David
Roth, Ellis
*Roth, Henry
Roth, Henry W.
Rupp, Vincent
Russett, Dorland

Schindler, Simon
Schlicting, William
Schmidt, Andrew A.
Schmidt, Arnold
Schmidt, Henry B.
*Schroeder, G. R.
*Schultz, Daniel Y.
Schultz, E. A.
Schweitzer, Aaron
Sweitzer, Joseph E.
Schwab, William
Shrock, M. S.

Siegel, Bert B.
Smith, Leonard
Spoolstra, Andrew
Stauffer, Paul
Stauffer, Emmanuel
Steiner, Armin
Steiner, Clayton
Steiner, Paul
Steiner, Lyle
Stormes, Clifford
Strahm, Louis
Strubhar, Robert
*Stucky, D. C.
*Sumney, Jacob

Taylor, Clyde
Teale, John W.
*Thiessen, Henry C.
Thiessen, John C.
Tropf, Henry E.

Uphold, William B. Jr

Vlot, Cornelius
Vollmar, Clarence

Wagler, Elmer
Wagner, Herman
Walker, Harold
Warner, Harold
*Weatherley, Joseph
Weida, Dale A.
Weikel, A. L.
Wendt, Lowell
Wendt, Lyman
Welch, L. J.
Welch, Robert
Welty, Adam
Welty, Herald
Welty, Kent
Whittum, Roy
Wiederkehr, C. H.
Wilbur, Paul
Wheeler, George
Whiteman, William
Wiswell, H. E.
Wismer, W. S.
*Witmer, Adam E.
Witmer, Noah
Witmer, S. A.
Wood, Gordon

Yaggy, John R.

Zimmerman, Ezra

CHAPTER XV

Evaluating the Past and Facing the Future

In 1948, the Missionary Church Association celebrated its Golden Jubilee, fifty years of denominational history devoted to the cause of Christ in a lost and sinful world. Appraisals of the past can be revealing and must be done with an eye single to the good of the church and the glory of God. Much has been accomplished in these more than fifty years and the record will reveal the burdens of men's hearts, the agonies of their prayers, and the sacrifices of their lives as they lived and loved and labored to be faithful to the vision which God gave to them in the yester-years. That first generation of noble saints who made history in the founding of the church is gone, and the great cloud of witnesses above has been enriched by their presence there. A new generation of leaders follows in their train, a generation yet to be proven in the tomorrows for their faith and vision in leading the church to a more aggressive spiritual conquest both at home and abroad.

As we gaze backward across the years from the vantage point of the mid-century years we are impressed with the loyalty of men to their faith and convictions. The spiritual message, solid in its texture, and sane in its balance, represents the heart and life of the church. The well-rounded, full-orbed message of the fourfold Gospel was held to be the only hope of perishing men. The intense effort to avoid extremes without compromising truth and to emphasize essen-

tials without riding hobbies has given the Missionary Church one of the sanest presentations of truth. Many have sought fellowship in the church because of this balance and have found a satisfaction which is genuine and full in its teaching. In a period, too, when modernism and apostacy have cut severely into the ranks of larger and more influencial churches, the Missionary Church has maintained a solid and uncompromising loyalty to the faith delivered with undebatable conviction to the fathers of the church. Across more than fifty years the church has kept this faith and has sought to be true to the trust committed unto her.

In any review of the past, there will inevitably and inescapably come to one's attention the primary aim and objective of the church which was missions. The church was born with a missionary passion and vision. It came into existence to carry out the great commission. It was named the Missionary Church Association, an association of churches united and working cooperatively to do the job of evangelization in all of the world. The founding of churches in the homeland was only a means to an end, to more adequately, more effectively, and more quickly carry the message of life-giving hope into all the world. Missionary conventions were held, missionary messages were given, missionary offerings were received, missionary candidates were recruited, and the missionary atmosphere was everywhere the vital breath of the church. This vital spirit and passion has come to be taken too much for granted. The missionary conventions need to be rethought and revitalized. A greater prayer program for the missionaries and their fields must be inaugurated and encouraged. Local churches must become centers of evangelistic and missionary activity. Pastors

must become enthusiastic leaders using every means and method to stir and stimulate their churches to greater sacrifice and service. Let the thought of ever retrenching be far from us, but let it be faced too that there can be deadly peril in stagnation, in consolidation of present positions without an aggressive program for advancement. We must set up new aims and objectives and then strike out to reach them. *Evangelize* is still the cry and challenge echoing down the corridors of time into the present. We must be rising more nobly and more energetically to meet this challenge in the present.

It must not be forgotten that the Missionary Church was born out of the throes and fires of evangelism and revivalism. The great revivals of those early days gave impetus and inspiration to all that followed in the founding of churches and the strengthening of organized effort. Those were days when men and women paid the price for revival, and revival came as it always must where conditions are met. Meetings in homes, in the open air, in school houses, in tents, in churches, in the city and in the country, in field or forest, wherever they were held, all carried the floodtides of divine blessing and revival. There was opposition, both satanic and human, but prevailing prayer never failed to rout the enemy and win the victory. Those were great and glorious days of high incoming tides of spiritual quickening and awakening.

Does the history of the church consistently merit such an appraisal of its life and ministry? There might well be some alarm in a true and honest reckoning with what has happened across the years. There has been a gradual waning of revival blessing and losing of revival fervor. A great revival has not stirred the denomination for many years and we have become con-

tent and complacent in our orthodoxy, routine and regular in our forms and methods, and lacking in a faith which believes God for the impossible and the incredible. Many local churches hold regular revival meetings but experience no revivals. Evangelism is still a part of our heritage, but it has been lost out of our hearts. The salvation of souls is still the creed and cry, but there are few churches where souls are being saved with any regularity. Altars which once felt the hot splash of the penitent's tears are barren, and the faithful gather to worship week after week with little concern or burden. The need of the mid-century hour is for a mighty awakening throughout our churches which will restore the heart and heat of evangelistic passion. No denomination can stagnate and remain small where evangelistic fires burn, where compassion for the lost leads to agonizing prayer, and where heartfelt responsibility for witnessing leads men and women afield. In the protection of the church and the preservation of the creed, we have confined and cloistered ourselves. Too many churches have become ingrown with no open-faced, out-of-doors ministry. There is the paralyzing tendency to hide behind stained glass windows and such indoor life has left the church colorless and anemic. The Missionary Church needs to go forth into the open air, into the great areas around her. Every local church ought to give birth to and mother another Missionary Church or two, or three. Such aggressive evangelistic effort and revivalistic spirit will bring a new glow of health upon her cheek, a new pulse of strength into all her veins. She will have a sweeter temper, a warmer love, a clearer voice, and firmer grasp in the face of increasing opportunities.

The Missionary Church has not always been challenged with the larger vision, the greater conquest,

the bigger job, the quicker move. All of this has led too many times to doing only the little things, often sluggishly, and with little effectiveness. There has been a dangerous content to move along slowly and to make some progress, but not to measure that progress in terms of well-defined objectives and goals. Measurement of such progress can only be made either by the yardstick of such aims and objectives, or by comparisons which have long ago been declared odious. That there is a dissatisfaction with the achievements and accomplishments of the past fifty years constitutes a most hopeful sign for the future of the church.

The Missionary Church Association faces a crucial hour and stands at a most decisive crossroad. It is the conclusion of history that institutions reach their zenith of might and ministry at the half-century mark. Then decline and decay sets in to begin the downward trend which leads to organizational perversion or extinction. The second half century has already begun. The opportunities are incomparable and overwhelming. Doors of ministry are wide open both at home and in foreign lands. The time is short and the light of day is passing. The night cometh when no man nor church can work. Church leaders and ecclesiastical authorities speak in terms of two years, three years, five years, and ten years at the most. Clouds of judgment hang low in the skies and all signs indicate the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Will these remaining years be years of doing little more than consolidating the gains already made? Will they be years of marking time, waiting without working, looking up without looking ahead, praying without planning, services without sacrifice? Or will the Missionary Church reverse the decisions of history and rise to the challenge of the present to do its greatest work in this crisis hour

and in the years that remain if Jesus tarries? The answer rests with you and me and a host of fellow Christians who love the church, appreciate its message, and who still believe in its mission. Let us rise with fresh vigor and renewed vision to do the greater work which remains to be done.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Facing Page

1. Tent Meeting Scene, July, 1898 24
2. Rev. A. E. Funk .....
3. Convention Party, Nickerson, Kans., Aug., 1901 .....
4. Group of Ministers, Swanton, O., Aug., 1904 25
5. Bethany Home, Bluffton, Ohio 40
6. Convention at Meal, Archbold, O., Aug., 1909 .....
7. Convention Before Tent, Archbold, O., Aug., 1909 .....
8. Convention, Pandora, O., Aug., 1911 41
9. Rev. J. E. Ramseyer 48
10. Rev. B. P. Lugibihl 48
11. Rev. D. Y. Schultz .....
12. Rev. Wm. Egle .....
13. Rev. David Roth .....
14. Rev. Henry Roth .....
15. Early Picture of Schultz Hall 49
16. General Committee, Aug., 1906 56
17. Convention Group, Berne, Indiana, Aug., 1906 .....
18. Convention Dining Dept., Aug., 1906 .....
19. Rev. Henry Zehr, first missionary 57
20. Ramseyer Memorial Building 64
21. Rev. J. E. Ramseyer, in his later years .....
22. Central District Workers, April 10, 1947 .....
23. Rev. B. F. Leightner 65
24. Bethany Hall 72
25. Founders' Memorial .....
26. Chapel Group .....
27. Music Studio .....
28. Providence Hall 73
29. Central District Prayer Conference, 1939 80
30. Central District Workers' Conference, 1911 .....
31. Workers from Western District, 1946 .....
32. Workers from Midwestern District, 1947 81
33. Home Workers in the Ozarks, 1947 81